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IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

AN ESSAY

ON THE

RITUAL OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

"The glorious habit by which sense is made
Subservient still to moral purposes
Auxiliar to divine."

—WORDSWORTH



LONDON

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ANALYSIS OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

Scope of the Essay—For whom intended—Remarks on the tone of certain Writers on Ritual—The Method adopted in this Essay is an Appeal to the New Testament exclusively—Why—How to Search the Scriptures—Illustration of Unscrupulous Controversy from a work by Dr Cumming, Pp. 1-25

PART I.

THE CHARACTER OF CATHOLIC RITUAL IN HARMONY WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER I.—FIRST PRINCIPLES.

1. The Great Truths of Scripture do not always lie on the Surface—
2. Ritual Unchristian, unless it leads to, or flows from, "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"—Our Lord's Words Examined—Statement of the Catholic View—
3. There is no Code of Ritual in the New Testament—Protestant Argument from this—Catholic Answer, Pp. 29-45

CHAPTER II.—SPLENDOUR.

Splendour not essential to Ritual, yet eminently Christian—This is Proved from a Review of the Supernatural Phenomena which accompanied the Birth, Baptism, Transfiguration, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost—This was God's own Ritual, and the Model on which Catholic Ritual has been formed, Pp. 46-62

CHAPTER III.—APOSTOLIC WORSHIP.

Apostolic Worship not Splendid—Protestant Argument from this—Catholic Explanation in the Poverty and Persecution of the Early Church—Proofs that absence of Splendour was not the result of Principle—Protestants misinterpret the Accounts of our Lord's "Simplicity" in the New Testament, as the Jews misinterpreted the Prophecies of the Messiah's "Magnificence" in the Old Testament—Some Contrasts of Holy Scripture which Explain each other, . . . Pp. 63-70

CHAPTER IV.—SUPPOSED DANGER OF ABUSE.

Not so great as of the Splendour of Nature—Illustrations from Travellers and Poets—Cardinal Wiseman's Description of the *Quarant' Ore*, and Coleridge's Description of Mount Blanc—Protestants misjudge the Effect of Ritual on Catholics: 1. Because they do not understand the Influence on Catholics of the Belief in the Real Presence; 2. Because to Protestants Ritual is strange and perplexing, not to Catholics; 3. Because Modern Controversies have given Ritual an unnatural Prominence—Is Protestant Simplicity always Spiritual?—Testimonies of Menzel, Hamilton, and Wilson, . . . Pp. 71-90

CHAPTER V.—SYMBOLISM.

Strange Mistakes of some Protestants regarding the Effect of Ritual in the Conversion of the Heathen, and on Catholic Populations—Splendour is a Rare Feature in Catholic Worship—Symbolism is an Ordinary Characteristic—Objections Stated to a Multiplied, Minute, and Symbolic Ceremonial—Appeal to the New Testament—Pharisaism and Ritualism not Identical—False Ritualism and True Ritualism—List of Minute Ceremonies used by Jesus Christ and His Apostles—Conclusions, . . . Pp. 91-106

CHAPTER VI.—SYMBOLISM (*continued*).

Symbolism not proper to the Jews, but common to every Form of Religion—Examples—The Rites of the New Testament nearly all Symbolical—Illustrations—Symbolical Language of Scripture a valid Argument for Symbolical Rites—Refutation of Dr Vaughan—Argument drawn from the Imagery of the Apocalypse—Answers to Objections, . . . Pp. 107-126

CHAPTER VII.—MULTITUDE AND OBSCURITY.

Two Objections of the Anglican Reformers—Catholic Ceremonial not a Burden—Some Words of St Peter Explained—Catholic Worship not Theatrical—In what Sense, to what Extent, and for what Purpose, Ritual is Obscure—It is like the Holy Scriptures, . . . Pp. 127-137

PART II.

THE ORIGIN OF CATHOLIC RITUAL JUSTIFIED
BY THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER VIII.—TRADITION AND RITUAL.

Scope of the Second Part is to show the Testimony of the New Testament to Traditional Ritual—1. What is Tradition?—"Unwritten" Tradition does not Exclude Literature—Yet Tradition is a Living Witness, Accessible to the most Simple—It is the only Source of Unity—2. Statement of the Question regarding Tradition—Tradition not merely Supplementary to Scripture—Tradition is the voice of God's *Works*, especially of Ritual—Illustrations—In the Catholic View Ritual and Divine Tradition do not Admit of Interruption—3. What would be the Proper Way of Settling the Controversy—Tradition ought to be heard in its own Defence, yet here the Appeal will be to Scripture only, Pp. 141-161

CHAPTER IX.—RITUAL A DIVINE WITNESS.

What were the Traditions of the Pharisees—Real and Apocryphal Traditions Distinguished by the same means as Real and Apocryphal Scriptures—Protestant Traditions—The Bible was not intended by God to Supplant Tradition—Proof from History of God's Providence—Arguments in Favour of Tradition from Prophecy, from our Lord's Conduct, from the Conduct and Language of the Apostles, Pp. 162-185

CHAPTER X.—TRADITION THE TEST OF SCRIPTURE.

Misconception of Dr Whately—He confounds Protestant and Catholic Tradition—They are utterly Distinct in their Nature—Protestant Society has only the material Custody of Scripture, and its Traditions are professedly Derived from Scripture; whereas the Primitive Church had its Traditions independently of Scripture, and these Traditions were the Test by which the Scripture Canon was formed—Theory of a Recent Author, regarding the "Verifying Faculty," Refuted—The Verifying Faculty must be Educated—That of the Primitive Church was formed by Tradition—If Tradition is Lost the Verifying Faculty is Maimed—Even if Protestants could Test the Present Canon they cannot Test the Books that were Lost—It is certain that Apostolic Writings have Perished—Protestants can have no Assurance of the Completeness of the Canon—Illustration of these Principles in the Matter of Ritual, Pp. 186-206

CHAPTER XI.—RITUAL A KEY TO SCRIPTURE.

The Scripture References to Ritual require a Key, and were intended to be Read by Help of the Key of Existing Ritual—This is Proved by a Consideration of all the Passages regarding the two Rites received by Protestants—1. *Baptism*—Theory of the “*Ecce Homo*” Examined—The Gospels do not Contain Sufficient Information, nor the Acts of the Apostles—Use of Technical Phrases in Scripture which Tradition must Interpret—The Epistles do not Supply what is Deficient in the Historical Books—The Scope of the Epistles according to Locke—Conclusions—2. *The Eucharist*—Testimony of the Gospels and Epistles Examined—3. Without a Key we could not Learn from Scripture the Relative Importance of Various Rites—Illustrations from the “*Washing of Feet*” and the Sabbath, . . . Pp. 207–230

CHAPTER XII.—PICKING THE LOCK.

Can Scripture be Interpreted like other Ancient Books?—Argument that it cannot from the History of Scripture Criticism—Illustration regarding Baptism—Second Illustration regarding the Eucharist—By the Protestant Treatment of Scripture the Sacrament of Unity becomes the Main Cause of Diversity—The Reasons why Scripture cannot be Interpreted without Tradition, are, that it was Written for those who Possessed Tradition; and those who Reject Tradition can neither Supply its Defect from other Sources nor from Conjecture—Why God thus Inspired Scripture, . . . Pp. 231–248

CHAPTER XIII.—“CIRCUMSPICE.”

Sir Christopher Wren's *Építaph* applicable to the Work of Jesus Christ—In what Sense Scripture is Complete—Why Permanent Institutions like Ritual are only Slightly Touched on in Scripture—From the Nature of the New Testament we should Expect to find Minor and Secondary Matters Occupying a more Prominent Position than others of Primary Importance—Important Conclusions from this Principle—How to Read Scripture, . . . Pp. 249–266

PART III.

THE FORMATION OF CATHOLIC RITUAL BY PRINCIPLES
RECOGNISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE PATTERN ON THE MOUNT.

How Catholic Ritual grew up—The Pattern on the Mount is the Life of Jesus Christ—The Church is able to create Ritual—Answer to an

Contents.

vii

Objection of Dr Vaughan—Catholic Ritual results from *Love* of Jesus Christ—Testimony of Lavater, . . . Pp. 269-282

CHAPTER XV.—COMPENSATION.

Reparation a Natural Instinct, which has Peculiar Scope in the Religion of Jesus Christ—Singular Reasoning of some Protestants—The Magi—Sermon before the Fathers of Ephesus—Passage from Dr Newman—Mary Magdalen—The Procession of Palms—Application to the Holy Eucharist—Christian Chivalry, . . . Pp. 283-297

CHAPTER XVI.—THE GREAT LEGACY.

The Real Presence—Dr Vaughan's Remarks—History of the Sensible Presence of God on Earth from the Creation of Man to the Incarnation—God's Presence in the Incarnation—1. More Real—2. More Hidden—3. More Gentle—Protestant View that with the Incarnation all Sensible Tokens of God's Presence left the Earth—Catholic View that they became Permanent—This View alone consistent with Scripture—Answer to Objections—Inconsistency of the Protestant View—Its Consequences Exemplified in Milton and Wordsworth—The Holy Eucharist the Source of Ritual, yet Pre-eminently the Mystery of Faith, . . . Pp. 298-327

CHAPTER XVII.—TWO VIEWS OF HISTORY.

The Protestant View makes Religious History an Anti-Climax—Passage from Milton—The Catholic View regards History as a Development—*A Priori* Character of Protestant View—Theory of a Recent Author—Gradual Victory of Catholics in the Historical Controversies of the Last Three Centuries—Infidel Theories—Catholic View of History more Consoling and more Honourable to Jesus Christ—The New Testament should be Interpreted by its Fulfilment in the Catholic Church—Examples, . . . Pp. 328-341

THE RITUAL OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE entering directly into the matter of this Essay, I wish to let my reader know my scope in writing it, the class of persons to whom it is addressed, and the method it pursues.

I. It is now nearly half a century since Wordsworth, in one of his ecclesiastical sonnets, gave expression to his regrets at the destructive work of the Protestant Reformers—

“ Would that our scrupulous sires had dared to leave
Less scanty measure of those graceful rites
And usages, whose due return invites
A stir of mind too natural to deceive !”

These regrets are becoming every day more common,

A

and those who share them seem determined that they shall no longer remain inefficacious.

But the recent endeavours which have been made within the Anglican Church to restore somewhat of the variety and splendour of the ancient Ritual have awakened a powerful opposition, and given rise to an active controversy regarding the nature of religious worship.

A Catholic can scarcely remain an indifferent spectator of a controversy in which the principles and practice of the Catholic Church are the main topic of dispute, or rather the butt of all contradiction.

The modern controversy regarding Ritualism comprises two distinct questions.

First, Is that theory of worship in itself true or false ?

Secondly, Is it in or out of place in the Anglican Church ?

From the latter of these two questions I hold myself entirely aloof. With Ritualism, as the designation of a school or opinion in the Church of England, I have no concern. But by Ritualism is popularly meant that use of religious ceremonial which obtains in the Catholic Church ; and it is loudly and repeatedly asserted by innumerable voices, that the principles of Catholic Ritualism are not of Christian origin, but are derived from Jewish and from heathen sources. The truth of these assertions is what I have undertaken to discuss.

A limitation must, however, here be made.

The word Ritualism is taken in several, perhaps in most, of the books which have been written against it, to mean that whole system of religion which recognises a priesthood, a sacrifice, sacraments, and the use of symbolism. I admit readily enough that the question of the use of external ceremonies, of art, and splendour, and wealth, in divine worship, is not merely æsthetical. I admit, and will show in the proper place, that not only great doctrines are in question, but that the very mode of revealing to the world almost all doctrines is involved in the Catholic system of worship. There is a close connexion in fact, and perhaps even in logic, between Ritual and certain very fundamental principles of religion; such as, for instance, the visible nature of the Church, the supernatural character of the priesthood, and the efficacy of the sacraments. Yet it by no means follows that we cannot treat of the use of ceremonial without treating at the same time of all subjects connected with it. It is not my intention, therefore, to follow the example of some writers, who announce a Treatise on Ritualism, and then, touching only incidentally on the principles of worship, give long dissertations against the obligation of confession, the efficacy of absolution, or the lawfulness of the invocation of saints. The discussion shall here be confined to Ritualism proper, and the topics immediately connected with it.

In order to avoid confusion, I will venture to make a threefold division of the subjects involved in this controversy.

1. It is well known that the Catholic Church teaches the supernatural character and efficacy of certain rites, which she believes to be of divine institution. This doctrine, and the practice resulting from it, have been sometimes called the Sacramental System. This is, no doubt, in itself by far the most important aspect of Ritualism. Yet comparatively little will be said about it in this Essay ; partly because of the many doctrinal matters which it would be necessary to discuss, and partly because the whole question has been so fully and frequently treated by other writers.

2. In the second place, the Catholic Church makes use of many symbolic ceremonies, some of which she believes to be of divine, others of ecclesiastical, origin ; and this is a frequent subject of accusation against her. Sometimes the principle itself of *Symbolism* is objected to ; sometimes, while the principle is admitted, either the variety or the minuteness of Catholic Symbolism is attacked.

These are questions which I shall enter into fully.

3. Lastly, there is a phase of Ritualism not considered essential by the Catholic Church. She can easily dispense with it : but she readily admits it. It is the natural development of her principles, when no

obstacle hinders their development. This is *magnificence or splendour*. It is far less important in the eyes of Catholics than the two other forms of Ritualism I have just mentioned ; yet, as it attracts the attention of Protestants more easily, it is considered peculiarly characteristic of the worship of Catholics. It will, therefore, occupy a prominent place in this Essay.

II. And now, having limited and defined, as far as seemed necessary, the subject-matter of this Essay, let me explain for what class of readers it is intended.

I trust that it may not be without interest and profit to my fellow Catholics. Not that they need the proofs which I shall adduce on behalf of the divine character of Catholic Ritual. The Catholic Church is the mother who has taught them to know God. They have knelt, if I may so say, like little children by their mother's side, with hands joined, and with eyes raised to their mother's face. They have seen her inspired and unearthly gaze fixed on the Invisible; and they have learnt from her to believe, to hope, to reverence, and love.

Strangers may need proof that such a mother is devout; it would be an insult to offer them to the child.

Yet the child, too, may love to hear his mother's

piety defended against detractors ; and he may listen willingly to one who speaks to him of its sublimity, and traces it to its divine origin.

But this Essay is not written primarily for Catholics. Neither is it intended for those who of late years have been called Ritualists in the Church of England.

As I conceive that Ritualism is in palpable contradiction to the historical character of the Church of England, I can, of course, feel no sympathy with those who are seeking to transplant it to such a soil. Yet as theirs is perhaps rather an error of fact than of principle, I do not feel any desire to engage with them in controversy.

For whom, then, is this Essay intended ? It is intended as a help towards the removal of the prejudices of ordinary Protestants. I have long entertained a thought which has been recently expressed by the Archbishop of Westminster. "We owe," he says, "an especial duty to the class of the English people in which descends the mid-stream of traditional hostility to the Catholic Church, that is, the middle class of educated and industrious men, the heart of English national life, vigorous, quiet, intelligent, and benevolent, though darkened by inherited prejudices and narrowed by anti-Catholic faults. To this class, above all, we have a mission of charity, that is, to preach

the truth in patience and to wait till they will listen." *

If I may be allowed to say so, I have a more personal reason for this course. I have long made my own a prayer with which St Augustine concludes one of his theological treatises, written against an error of the sect to which in his youth he had been attached: "O great God, O God Almighty and of infinite bounty, O Thou, One God in Three Persons, whom the Catholic Church adores, I humbly beseech Thee, having experienced Thy mercy towards myself, that Thou wilt not permit that those with whom I have lived from my childhood upwards in the closest union, should be separated from me in matters which regard Thy worship." †

In order to be able to enter into the views and objections of this class of Protestants more completely, I have deemed it a duty to read several recent publications against Ritualism; and I should be uncandid if I did not confess to a sad feeling of disappointment. I was prepared for ignorance and prejudice, but not for what I have found. I was glad to believe, with the Archbishop of Westminster, of the great body of Nonconformists, that "if they are rougher in their

* "The Reunion of Christendom," p. 14.

† Lib. de dua. Animabus, n. 24, "Supplex oro, expertus in me misericordiam tuam, ne homines, cum quibus mihi a pueritia in omni convictu fuit summa consensio, in tuo cultu a me dissentire permittas."

language against the Catholic Church (than Anglicans), they are more generous and candid adversaries, more vehement but less bitter, and altogether free from the littleness of personality and petty faults which sometimes stain the controversy of those who are intellectually nearer to the truth."

To my surprise, I have not been able to find among those opponents even one writer who had attempted to understand our views, or to become acquainted with our reasons. Most of the books were made up of declamation and invective. I have not found one which supported the controversy in the calm yet earnest spirit which befits the defence of truth; not one in which opponents were treated even with the ordinary decency of civilised intercourse.

Conspicuous among the revilers of Catholic faith and practice is our old antagonist, the Rev. Dr Cumming, who has published twelve lectures, entitled, "Ritualism the Highway to Rome." The large sale of this clergyman's works is a sufficient proof of the popularity he enjoys; and I imposed on myself the unpleasant task of reading through those lectures in order to become acquainted with the views of the class which he represents. On the subject of Ritual, however, I found almost nothing. I will give at the end of this Introduction one specimen of the spirit in which these lectures were composed.

Another Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Dr White, has published a short treatise, called, "Ritualism and New Testament Christianity," in which, strange to say, no use whatever is made of the New Testament. It is simply a compilation of quotations to prove that Ritualists of the Church of England, in their doctrines and principles of worship, are copying from Roman Catholics. And this is considered sufficient reason by the author to pour out vituperation upon both.

A writer of a higher class than Dr Cumming or Dr White is the Rev. Dr Robert Vaughan, also, I believe, a Dissenting minister, and the author of several historical and theological works. In his book called "Ritualism in the English Church, in its relation to Scripture, Piety, and Law," there is more reasoning, though scarcely less invective, than in the lectures of Dr Cumming. I shall examine the value of his arguments in the course of my Essay, but as I am desirous to keep the discussion as free as possible from all personal matter, I will make a few remarks here on the strange and insulting style of language which both he and many other writers seem to think they have a right to employ when speaking of the Catholic Church.

Dr Vaughan complains, I know not with what justice, of the "haughty and censorious temper in which the majority of Ritualists indulge towards Protestant

Christendom ;” and yet he not only himself brings the most sweeping, disdainful, and odious accusations against Catholic Christendom, but even defends the virulence of his language.

“Some people,” he says, “expect us to speak of the Ritual movement in terms of gentle courtesy, of tender forbearance, being studious of excuses in its favour. Souls of Wickliffe and of Knox, come back again and let us hear your tones on this theme ! ”

I have been anxious to state the views of our opponents as fairly and even as strongly as possible. I have therefore generally preferred to let them speak for themselves ; and though I have studiously omitted to notice mere railing accusations, and the passages I have selected for quotation were such as contained the clearest statements or most specious reasonings of the writers, yet I fear that even these passages will jar on my readers’ feelings as they did on my own.

Yet what could I do ? I had to quote from authors like Dr Cumming, who conceive that they are doing God service in denouncing with all the energy of their souls “ the three unclean spirits, Rationalism, Romanism, and Ritualism : ” * the fault was not mine if I could not find passages free from the taint of fanaticism.

Then why quote from them at all ? it may naturally be asked. Why enter into controversy with such

* “ Ritualism the Highway to Rome.”

writers? I reply, that their assertions, boldly made and continually repeated, have influenced and prejudiced against us men very different from themselves. There are some who think evil of Catholic worship, not because they wish to think evil, but because they have ever heard it spoken of as an evil thing. Yet it is no pleasure to them to believe that the Christian Church throughout the world has apostatised for ages from the purity of the faith, and from "worship in spirit and in truth." They have reluctantly believed this to be the case; but the thought of it has lain on their souls with the oppression of a nightmare. They would willingly be relieved from it, if this could be done without treason to historic or religious truth.

It is for such I write, not for those who hug the evil dream, and would feel that the joy of their life was gone if they were compelled to think kindly of the faith of the majority of Christians. To Catholics, much that I say may seem superfluous. It may seem like attempting to prove that the lily is white, or the rose of sweetest odour. Let them be patient with me for the sake of those whose prejudices require such proofs. I address those on whom the sophisms and calumnies ever resounding in certain pulpits, ever repeated in certain books, have made impression, though they themselves are neither sophists nor revilers.

They have little or no intercourse with Catholics ; they know the Catholic religion but from the lips of its enemies.

There is an enormous prejudice instilled into their souls in earliest years, sedulously fostered by their teachers as they grow older, regarded as a first principle in the society into which they were born, and which is a bar both to the argument of reason and to the sympathies of noble instincts, until it is surmounted,—the prejudice that, however philosophy, art, or poetry, may approve of Catholic worship, yet that the Gospel is its enemy, that on the Gospel it is not based, and to the Gospel it dares not appeal.

It is to the removal of this prejudice my efforts are directed. I speak to the prejudiced, but I speak not to the obstinate. If there is any one who “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth,” to him I address myself. As for men who are determined to think evil of us, on them argument would be thrown away.

I enter, therefore, once for all, my protest against the insulting and calumnious tone of controversy which so many of our opponents have thought proper to adopt ; but as a Catholic, writing in defence of the Church, and venturing to speak in her name, I can give but one answer to such language—the pathetic and dignified complaint of our divine Redeemer, when

the Jews insulted Him as one possessed by a devil :
“ I have not a devil, but I honour my Father, and you
have dishonoured me ” (John viii. 49).*

I would not be understood to condemn an earnest, and even indignant language, when the subject demands it. I have not attempted myself to disguise the feelings with which I regard the indecent and outrageous attacks made on the Catholic Church, and the absurd pretence set up by some to a monopoly of reason and good sense. The distinction is well drawn by Lord Bacon, and I commend his words to all those who continue to invoke the shades of Wickliffe and of Knox.

“ It is more than time,” says the Lord Chancellor, “ that there were an end and surcease made of this immodest and deformed manner of writing lately entertained, whereby matter of religion is handled in the style of the stage. Indeed, bitter and earnest writing must not hastily be condemned ; for men cannot contend coldly and without affection about things which they hold dear and precious. A politic man may write from his brain without touch and sense of his heart, as in a speculation that appertaineth not unto him, but a feeling Christian will express in his words a character

* As in none of the passages of Scripture which I shall quote, is there any important difference between the ordinary Protestant version and the translation in common use among English-speaking Catholics, I shall make use throughout the following essay of the latter.

of zeal and love—the latter of which, as I could wish rather embraced, being more proper for these times, yet is the former warranted also by great examples.

“But to leave all reverent and religious compassion toward evils, or indignation towards faults, and to turn religion into a comedy or satire—to search and rip up wounds with a laughing countenance, to intermix Scripture and scurrility sometimes in one sentence, is a thing far from the devout reverence of a Christian, and scant beseeeming the honest regard of a sober man.” *

I believe that I may say in sincerity, that these are the principles that have guided me in the present controversy. I am sure that I shall neither rouse the anger nor wound the feelings of any sincere Protestant by ridicule of his belief. If I have now and then repelled unseemly attacks with warmth, or treated with scorn the arrogant pretensions of self-conceited men, I offer no apology. St Augustine and St Francis of Sales, the meekest and humblest of men, did the same.

III. It remains now to explain the method that I intend to pursue ; for the subject is wide, and various modes of discussing it present themselves. An appeal might be made to reason, or to experience, or to tradition ; to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, or to those of the New Dispensation. I shall confine myself

* Bacon, “Of Church Controversies.”

in these pages to those proofs of the Catholic theory which may be found in the books of the New Testament.

I am led to do so from having observed the peculiar tone of triumph with which our opponents appeal to the New Testament for the overthrow of ceremonial worship. Let us listen to the challenge.

A writer during the recent controversy states clearly enough, though in coarse and angry language, what seems to be the general impression among Protestants on the subject. "I think it very lamentable," he says, "that so many of our countrymen should so persistently ransack the Bible in order to obtain what they consider a precedent or excuse for their absurd and irritating manner of worship. If the Jews wore particular dresses and used particular ceremonies by Divine command, is that a justifiable reason why the so-called ministers of God's Word should do so at this present time? We are not Jews; we have nothing in common with them; their whole ceremonial was different to what ours should be. It is the New Testament we should let guide us; and surely, in the name of common sense, we can find nothing in it to countenance the blasphemous antics of some of our present Ritualists.

"We should look at the highest authority in such cases. Our Lord's whole life on earth was conducted in the very simplest and plainest manner. Should we not

try to imitate His walk if we are really anxious for religion's sake to act rightly? Without being irreverent, I may ask how would St Peter or St Paul have looked if dressed up in the gorgeous costume of the modern Ritualist? The very thought is monstrous. It is very sad to think that the plain and beautiful Gospel of God should be so perverted and smothered by all this wicked, useless, and ridiculous ceremonial." In a similar strain, Dr Vaughan, after developing what he considers the testimony of the New Testament against Ritualism, exclaims triumphantly, "Great, visibly great, is the distress of the Ritualists on finding so much in the New Testament opposed to their tastes, and so little that can be construed, by any process, so as to seem to be in their favour." "Ritualists talk of the fathers," says Dr White, "and carry us back to the third and fourth centuries; *we* talk of the apostles, and of our Lord, and carry them back farther still, to the apostolic age, to the apostolic precedent, and the inspired apostolic rule."

Thus is the gauntlet confidently cast down, and with equal confidence I take it up. As a Catholic, of course, I do not admit that a question such as this has been left by God to be decided by each man's private opinion; neither do I think that the appeal should be made to the Holy Scriptures alone, before whatever tribunal it is made; nevertheless, I believe it will be a

work of peace and charity to accept the appeal as it is proposed by Protestants. It has ever been the custom in the Catholic Church to smooth the way towards the acceptance of her teaching, by answering from Scripture the arguments which were derived from Scripture against her.

I propose, then, to "search the Scriptures;" not, however, for the purpose of construction, but of verification. To take the Bible as the sole source of religious knowledge, and to attempt to deduce therefrom a whole system of worship, would only result in adding a new heresy to the formidable list which this treatment of God's Word has produced both in ancient and in modern times. But to take a living system, which appeals to the Bible, and to verify its claims, is a method of seeking truth which has often been pursued successfully.

When St Paul preached to the Bereans, the Acts of the Apostles inform us that "they searched the Scriptures whether these things were so," and they are praised for their nobility of character, because in their search they were guided by an ardent love of truth at any cost.

I hope to find some noble souls, like the Bereans, to accompany me in the search I am about to institute.

Will it be out of place to say a word, at the end of this Introduction, regarding the spirit in which our inquiry should be conducted?

B

We have a warning in the words of our divine Lord Jesus Christ—"Search the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting: and the same are they that give testimony of Me. But you will not come to Me that you may have life" (John v. 39, 40). It is not necessary to inquire whether these words are a counsel or a reproach. One thing is beyond controversy. It is that men may be great students of Scripture, like the Pharisees; that they may have so much love and veneration for the Word of God as to think to find in it everlasting life; yet, at the same time, they may be so much under the dominion of prejudice and passion as utterly to misunderstand the teaching of Scripture, and to find arguments in it for opposing Him to whom it points. They thus find death where they think to find life.

In the particular case of the Pharisees our blessed Lord revealed the evil dispositions which prevented the searching of Scripture from leading to any good result. They "had not the love of God in them," and they "received glory one from another" (John v. 42, 44), May I allude to the preparation necessary for a fruitful study? I know that I have no right to preach a sermon while promising an Essay, so I will borrow the homily from the pen of Dr Cumming, and content myself with its application.

"That we may receive the truth," says the preacher,

“that we may reject the error that is often intermixed in all its destructive and deadly influences, let us pray that the Holy Spirit of God would remove from our minds every cloud of prejudice, and scatter from our hearts every corrupt appetite and desire. And let us never forget that a pure heart has more to do with a true creed than a vigorous or powerful mind. It is not logic, it is not argument, it is not evidence that men need, for they have abundance of all that, but it is the removal of the film from the mind’s eye, the correction of the disturbing and distorting influence of the heart ; and when that heart is made right, and the eye of the mind is made pure, then all things will be seen in their just and beautiful proportions ; the truth will be received in all its purity ; it will be unfolded in all its practical excellence.”

Beautiful words and most true ! Alas ! that the preacher should have exhibited in his own person the “ film ” rather than the “ pure eye.” That he has done so in his whole treatment of the subject of Ritualism is, however, most certain ; and if I now proceed to give a specimen of this, it is not to satisfy the petty malice of exhibiting the preacher in his practice, but because I could find no better exemplification in the present controversy of the nature of those “ distorting influences of the heart ” against which he warns us.

I will quote one passage from Dr Cumming's lectures, both as a specimen of the arts, or perhaps I should rather say, the blunders of unscrupulous controversy, and as a warning example of that evil spirit which makes all "searching of the Scriptures," in those who are possessed by it, lead only to more obstinate error and more bitter hate.

In his fourth lecture, entitled, "Should we confess to God or to man?" Dr Cumming said to his hearers :—

"In a beautiful poem by Longfellow, the confessional is so justly described, that I will trouble you by reading it."

He then read the following lines :—

"Here sits the priest, and faint and low,
Like the sighing of an evening breeze,
Comes through these painted lattices
The ceaseless sound of human woe.
Here, while her bosom aches and throbs
With deep and agonising sobs,
That half are passion, half contrition,
The luckless daughter of perdition,
Slowly confesses her secret shame,
The time, the place, the lover's name.
Here the grim murderer, with a groan,
From his bruised conscience rolls the stone ;
Thinking that thus he can atone
For ravages of sword and flame.
Indeed I marvel, and marvel greatly,
How a priest can sit here so sedately,
Reading the whole year out and in
Nought but a catalogue of sin,
And still keep any faith whatever
In human virtue—never, never."

It is quite evident from the words by which Dr Cumming introduces these lines that he wished his auditors to understand that he was quoting Longfellow's own sentiments, and that he had the authority of the celebrated American poet against the morality of the confessional.

Did he believe this himself? Charity would make us wish to think that he was quoting at second-hand, and that he had never read the context.

Yet if he had not read this poem, how could he call it beautiful? If he had read it, how could he not have remarked that the words that he quotes are put by Longfellow in the mouth of the *devil*; and that they in no way express the poet's own estimate of the confessional?

The poem is dramatic. In the lines which immediately precede those quoted, we have the beautiful soliloquy of the priest who has just risen from the confessional, which I will transcribe, both for its own sake and because it contains the contrast intended by the author to the diabolical view of the sacrament of penance, given in the lines which moved the admiration of Dr Cumming :—

“O blessed Lord ! how much I need
Thy light to guide me on my way !
So many hands, that, without heed,
Still touch Thy wounds, and make them bleed !
So many feet, that, day by day,
Still wander from Thy fold astray ;

Unless Thou fill me with Thy light,
I cannot lead Thy flock aright ;
Nor, without Thy support, can bear
The burden of so great a care,
But am myself a castaway !
The day is drawing to its close ;
And what good deeds, since first it rose,
Have I presented, Lord, to Thee,
As offerings of my ministry ?
What wrong repress'd, what right maintain'd,
What struggle pass'd, what victory gain'd,
What good attempted and attain'd ?
Feeble, at best, is my endeavour !
I see, but cannot reach the height
That lies for ever in the light,
And yet for ever and for ever,
When seeming just within my grasp,
I feel my feeble hands unclasp,
And sink discouraged into night !
For Thine own purpose Thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement ! ”

Longfellow here clearly tells us what *he* thinks of the morality of the confessional. He may not hold its divine origin, yet he believes that a zealous pure-minded priest may labour there sincerely for the good of souls. He believes that a priest may hear all those details of human crime, and yet, not only “keep faith in human virtue,” but aspire himself to the very ideal of perfection.

And then, as if to give force to this view of his own, and no doubt indirectly to rebuke the bigots who think evil of things most divine, he puts *their* sentiments into the mouth of the devil, who, with all his cunning, pronounces a judgment both false and

malicious. To find a parallel to this procedure of Dr Cumming, we must imagine a preacher first quoting with approval the devil's opinion as to the virtue of Job, and then attributing it to Moses.*

Yet I am convinced that the quotation was rather a blunder than a conscious and deliberate perversion. It is, however, the more instructive on that account, and I have brought it forward, not so much for the exposure of Dr Cumming, as to give an example of the spirit which warps the judgment of many controversialists.

For, how came a Presbyterian minister to quote with approbation the sentiments of the devil? I will not suppose that he remarked whose sentiments they were. No; he read the beautiful words which Longfellow has put in the mouth of the confessor, but as in them there was nothing congenial to his tone of mind, they made no impression upon him; he read on till he came to the devil's speech, and he found his own thoughts and sentiments so exactly echoed that he eagerly marked down the passage for future quotation, and pronounced the poem "beautiful."

An example like this teaches us as clearly as a whole treatise written on the subject, how necessary

* After this specimen of Dr Cumming's candour, the reader can appreciate the good taste with which he says (Lect. ix.), "I have never met with any man tainted with Romish doctrine who was not also very little reliable in his speaking truth."

is the "removal of the film from the mind's eye" (as Dr Cumming most truly said), before it can read Scripture aright.

The Pharisees, to whom our blessed Lord said "Search the Scriptures; . . . but you will not come to Me," read the Old Testament just as Dr Cumming reads Longfellow.

We may now proceed to the discussion of the subject proposed.

I have said that our search through the New Testament would be one of verification; that is, that we should first consider the nature of Catholic Ritual, and then examine whether the teaching of the New Testament seems to be in harmony with it, or to oppose it.

For the sake of greater clearness the Essay will be divided into three parts:

1. Catholic Ritual has certain characteristics—such as splendour, variety, minuteness, symbolism. Does the New Testament give any sanction to such features in Christian worship? This question will occupy us in the first part.

2. In the second place, we shall consider what the New Testament tells us of the origin of Christian Ritual. Catholic Ritual professes to be based on tradition as well as on Scripture. What testimony does the New Testament give us regarding ritualistic tradition?

3. Certain great principles or instincts have presided over the formation and development of Catholic Ritual. Are those principles recognised in the New Testament? This will be the subject of the third part.

Thus we shall have to consider the Character, Origin, and Formation of Catholic Ritual; not, however, in their fulness, but in their relation to the New Testament.

PART I.



THE

CHARACTER OF CATHOLIC RITUAL

IN HARMONY WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

I. I HAVE proposed, as a model of the method to be pursued in this Essay, the search which the Bereans made through the Scriptures of the Old Testament, to see whether matters really stood as St Paul had represented them in his sermon, whether he had quoted these Scriptures correctly, and whether the interpretation he had given to them was a plausible, a probable, a convincing one.

Let us begin our search with a few reflections suggested by this very history.

When St Paul announced in the synagogue of the Jews that the carpenter's son of Nazareth, crucified at Jerusalem, was the long-expected Messiah, the proposition seemed to the Bereans in the last degree incredible. It contradicted all their previous conceptions. Yet when they heard St Paul appealing to the very Scriptures with which they were familiar, and giving to them an interpretation which had never occurred to their minds before, they determined to

give him a patient hearing, and to weigh the matter calmly. The result was, that they found that St Paul was right, and that till then "a veil had been over their eyes when Moses was read."

Let me suppose, then, that my reader is just as firmly convinced that the New Testament is opposed to Ritualism, as the Bereans were that the Old Testament was opposed to a crucified Messiah; yet, as I too appeal to the New Testament, let me have a patient hearing and a calm judgment. Let my readers "search the Scriptures whether these things are so," and the result may be the conviction, that Protestant as well as Jewish education throws a veil over certain parts of the Word of God.

St Chrysostom, however, makes an important remark on the words of our blessed Lord, "Search the Scriptures." The Pharisees, he says, had been accustomed to read the Scriptures, not to *search* them. They had seen, therefore, only what was on the surface; but there was a rich treasure hidden beneath the surface, which they missed because they did not dig for it.

If the testimonies to Jesus Christ, who is the very end and scope of the Old Testament, do not lie on the surface, but have to be carefully and painfully sought out, no one need wonder if the testimonies to Ritualism are not obvious to every reader who is

familiar with the letter of the New Testament. The real question is, Are they there? not, Are they there so as to force themselves on the notice of every one? They may require a hint, a clue to their discovery, just like the prophecies which spoke of Jesus Christ. May He open our minds that we may understand the Scriptures!

2. Now a search through the Gospels brings to our mind the remarkable fact, that in none of His recorded words does the divine Founder of the Christian religion enter into any detail as to the future worship of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

By foretelling the destruction of the Temple, and the admission of all nations into His kingdom, He implicitly teaches that the ceremonial law of the Jews, which in many respects was essentially local and national, shall cease to be binding; but He does not describe the kind of worship which should be substituted for it.

His most explicit teaching on record is that conversation with the Samaritan woman which is related by St John alone among the Evangelists: "The woman saith to Him: Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore. Jesus saith to her: Woman, believe Me that the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father. You adore that which you

know not : we adore that which we know ; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore Him. God is a Spirit, and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 19-24).

Since these words are so continually referred to in the present controversy, it is important to ascertain what our blessed Lord does *not* say here, as well as what He does say.

He says that hitherto the worship offered by the Jews in Jerusalem, and not the schismatical and heretical worship of the Samaritans, had been acceptable to God.

He says that a new order of things is now commencing. The knowledge of God shall no longer be confined to one nation, nor His worship to one place. The worship, as well as the kingdom, of God shall be universal.

He says that God seeks a higher class of worshippers than He has hitherto generally found ; that the worship in which He delights must be akin to His own divine nature, which is spirit and truth.

He does *not* say that the universal worship shall not be offered up in temples,* nor that temples shall be

* " Our Saviour's declaration, when He foretold the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem, was not that there should never be any other house built to His honour, but rather that there should be many houses ; that they should be built, not merely at Jerusalem, or at Gerizim, but everywhere ; what was under the law a local ordinance, being henceforth a

inferior in beauty or riches to those of Jerusalem or Samaria.

He does not deny that the future worship of the Church shall be exterior as well as interior.

He does not say, He does not insinuate in any way, that the external element shall be in any degree less splendid than what has been offered up in the Temple.

It is a mere begging of the whole question to put this meaning into our Lord's words. If, indeed, worship in spirit and truth is irreconcilable with a minute or a splendid ceremonial; if even there is opposition between the two; then, of course, our Lord's words foretelling an increase of spiritual worship would also foretell an abolition or a diminution of the magnificence of external Ritual. But it must be remembered that, though this may seem an axiom to some Protestants, the vast majority of Christians of all ages deny it with convictions equally strong; and therefore it is a simple begging of the question to gather such a conclusion from our Lord's words.

Catholics see no antagonism whatever between piety and Ritual—no more than there is between believing with the heart unto justice, and confessing with the

Catholic privilege, allowed not here and there, but wherever was the Spirit and the Truth. The glory of the Gospel is not the *abolition* of rites, but their *dissemination*; not their absence, but their living and efficacious presence in the grace of Christ."—*Newman's Parochial Sermons*, vol. vi. Sermon. 19.

mouth unto salvation (Rom. x. 10). We see no opposition of any kind between fervour of *spirit* and magnificent rites, between *truth* of conception and minute or varied symbolism. The contrary opinion is surely not self-evident, and therefore cannot be legitimately deduced from our Lord's words, which do not explicitly contain it. Nor can it be imposed on them unless it be evident from other sources.

Writers of controversy seem often to be unaware that the interpretation they give to these words of Jesus Christ is not *necessarily* contained in them, and that for this reason, in controversy at least, they cannot assume, but ought to prove, their interpretation to be correct. Dr Vaughan, for instance, affirms the Protestant view in the most dogmatic tone, as if no contrary opinion to his own had ever been entertained by a man capable of reading Scripture. "The least," he says, "that can be inferred from our Lord's words is, that no such Ritual system as the history of Judaism presents was to have any place in the Christian Church. If that Church is to know anything of ceremonies, it must be within such limits as to be next to nothing, compared with the ceremonies of the Church preceding it. Our Lord, we may be assured, did not mean to say less than this when uttering the words we have cited. For it is to be distinctly marked, that not only are the things existing to pass away, nothing resembling that order of things is to

follow. The Local is to give place to the Universal, the Ritual to the Spiritual."

It is taken for granted here that the words Ritual and Spiritual contain antagonistic ideas, just like Local and Universal. But I repeat that these are all assumptions. It is Dr Vaughan, not Jesus Christ, who says all this. It will be the object of this Essay to see whether our blessed Lord implies such doctrines. All that I now ask is, that Protestant readers will suspend their judgment till they have weighed the evidence.

Let them also have the charity to believe that Catholics are no less zealous than themselves for the spirituality of God's worship; and that if we defend the use of Ritual, it is not as a hindrance, but as a help to interior piety. I am not yet entitled to assume that our views on this question are scriptural or Christian; but at least we have a view on the matter, and it may be well here to state it.

That the only worship pleasing to God is worship in spirit and in truth is acknowledged on all hands. That if the use of Ritual can be shown to be an obstacle to such worship, it must be rejected, is what we most readily concede. But that it is so in fact is what we strenuously deny. It is the belief of Catholics, that, in order that man might be "born not of the flesh but of God," "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Whence they conclude that through the senses

man is spiritualised, as by the senses he had been enslaved.

Our theory may perhaps be stated as follows :—

In its ordinary state the soul is weighed down by the senses; the multitude of objects ever acting on the senses enthrall the soul, and prevent it from soaring to things spiritual and divine. It requires a great effort to break this thralldom, and this effort is facilitated by the impressions made on the senses by the ceremonial of public worship. The senses are thus used against the senses, not to ensnare and captivate the soul, naturally free, but to set free the soul, naturally captive. The great pageant of things temporal, ever before the eyes, is, for a time, effaced by the imagery of things invisible; and the soul, escaping from its bondage, has a glimpse of the Eternal Spirit, and bows herself before Him in spiritual worship. And so, too, if the senses are used to release the *spirit* from its captivity to sense, the imagination is enlisted on the side of *truth*, to break the fascinating spell of error which acts quite as much by means of the imagination as of the reason. Reason may discover that things visible and transitory are but trifles. Yet visible and tangible trifles have an enchanting, a deluding power, a *lying* power over the soul, from which reason in vain strives to free itself. No doubt "the just man lives by faith," and it is faith which conquers the visible world by a lively realisation

of things unseen and eternal. Yet faith not merely conquers the world; it reduces it to obedience, and makes a servant of what was before an enemy. Faith creates a ceremonial, a living embodiment of its own thoughts and feelings, which then helps faith in its turn in the contest against the lies and treachery of sense.

The gallant Major Hodson, the hero of Delhi, with that "soldier's good sense," as De Maistre calls it, which often reaches truth by a shorter and more certain road than book learning, expresses this Catholic view of the spiritual use of external objects, which he had gathered from his own experience in India :—

"The more I think of it," he writes,* "the more strongly I feel the effects of mere external sights and sounds on the inner and better man. Our Gothic buildings, our religious-looking churches, have, I am sure, a more pacifying influence than is generally believed by those who are habituated to them, and have never felt the want of them. The wisdom and piety of our ancestors constructed such noble and stately temples—feeling, justly, that the human mind in its weakness requires to be called to the exercise of devotion by the senses as well as by reason and will. You may think this fanciful, but I am sure you would feel it more strongly than I do, were you to live for a

* From "Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India."

time in a country where *everything but religion has its living and existent memorials and evidence.*"

Major Hodson, in these last words, has perhaps touched the very essential reason of Ritual. It is, at least, the belief of the Catholic Church that the principle embodied in the words of Jesus Christ, "This do for a commemoration of Me," is capable of a very wide application. She has built up by degrees a vast system of Ritual, embracing in its cycle of fasts and feasts the whole year, influencing in its varied forms the whole mind and heart, gathering to its service all things beautiful and stately, meeting men on all occasions, accompanying them from the cradle to the grave, entering into the world and confronting it, in order that it may not be said that, in Christendom at least, everything *but* religion has its memorials and evidence.

This may seem to some an unspiritual and unchristian theory ; but as it is certainly no novel form of Christianity, nor one which has found little acceptance, it will be worth the attention of an earnest man to hear what proofs it can bring forward.

Let us continue, then, our search.

3. I have already observed that any one who goes to look in the New Testament for an account of the worship peculiar to the Christian Church, will discover, perhaps to his surprise, that there is no formal state-

ment there of *any* system of worship peculiar to Christ's followers. He will find brief indications of some new rites, not gathered into a code, but scattered here and there in different writings; he will have glimpses of the assemblies of the first disciples of Jesus Christ for common worship, but no description given for the instruction of future generations, nor sufficient detail to make them models for imitation.

I suppose every one must have remarked the absence from the New Testament of any book like that of Leviticus in the Old Testament. Dr Vaughan, whom I have quoted before, thinks that he sees in this a primary and invincible argument against Ritual. I will give his argument the benefit of his own statement.

"From what was done," he says, "in the case of the Hebrews, the conclusion is, that whenever the Divine Being imparts a revelation to a people needing such a Ritual as we find in the Book of Leviticus, He will Himself interfere and determine the matters of that Ritual, down even to the smallest provision to be included in it. The Divine Being changes not. Hence, whatever appears to Him to be good in given circumstances once, must appear to Him to be good in those circumstances always. Let it once be clear that it is a principle in His rules that wherever an elaborate ceremonial is desirable He will bestow it, as in the

times of the Old Testament, and it must then follow, that where He has not bestowed it—as He certainly has not in the times of the New Testament—then, to attempt to do what He has not done, must be not only superfluous, but presumptuous, contrary to His mind. He gave the Book of Leviticus to the Hebrews because they needed it; and we may be sure He would have given us a similar book if we had needed it.”

With this last sentence I cordially agree. There is no code of Ritual in the New Testament because the Christian Church does not need it. But the reason she does not need it is not that assigned by Dr Vaughan, that she has no Ritual to regulate, but a very different one. It is that she has the Spirit of God, not given in the same way to the Jewish Church. Her law of Ritual is written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God in the fleshy tables of the heart.

There is a fatal flaw running through Dr Vaughan’s argument. God is changeless, he says. This, of course, no one disputes. Therefore, he continues, under the same circumstances He will act in the same way. This might, perhaps, be questioned. A changeless God may speak “in divers manners,” even under the same circumstances. But suppose we grant this also, what then? Therefore, he concludes, since God

gave an elaborate Ritual to the Jews, wherever an elaborate ceremonial is desirable, He will Himself bestow it. But with Dr Vaughan's leave, this conclusion is not logical. It should stand thus:—Therefore, wherever, *under circumstances similar to those of the Jews*, an elaborate ceremonial *similar to theirs* is desirable, He will Himself give it.

If the Ritual of the Christian Church is essentially different from that of the Jews, if the latter from its very nature could not have existed without revelation, whereas the former for its production requires only such gifts and graces as the Christian Church is allowed by all to possess, then Dr Vaughan's argument falls to the ground. Now such is really the case.

Dr Vaughan assumes that the elaborateness of the Jewish Ritual—that is, I suppose, the variety and splendour of its ceremonies—was the main reason why God himself revealed it. But other and more urgent reasons can be assigned. First, then, the Jews were a prophetic people, and it was the will of God that their Ritual should be eminently prophetic or typical. But a prophetic Ritual can only come from Revelation. One of the great proofs of the Christian faith was to be in this—that its facts were prefigured in the ceremonies of a people who did not foresee them, and even rejected them when they were accomplished. If the Jews had embodied in symbols truths clearly

revealed to them, and hopes which they cherished, this, perhaps, would not have required graces beyond what were given to them; but it required a divine revelation to create symbols, the meaning of which was reserved for future ages. Should an ignorant man write correctly in a language he could not himself read, we should be certain that another, more learned than he, had guided his hand. When I see the Jew performing a Ritual, of which he has not the key, but which I as a Christian find in its minutest circumstances typical of Christian facts and doctrines, I am convinced that the Jew did not invent that Ritual, but received it by revelation from God; and I have a new confirmation of my faith.

But such is not the Ritual of the Catholic Church. The truth is now fully revealed; and however numerous or elaborate are our ceremonies, they either embody truths known to the Church, or recall facts of her past history, or express thoughts and feelings of which she is conscious, or hopes which she has based on promise. Such a Ritual may demand many supernatural gifts for its formation, but it does not require an express revelation like that of which Moses was the legislator.

Another difference between Catholic and Jewish Ritual is this, that much of the latter was imposed as a bondage. It was a hedge to separate the Jews

from the idolaters who surrounded them; or it was a discipline to school them for better things. Such a Ritual requires to be imposed, and is not a spontaneous creation.

Again, the Jewish Church was national and transitory. It was possible, therefore, from the first constitution of the nation, to give to it a code fixed in the most important details, and which would serve for the particular purpose and limited period for which it was intended. But the Christian Church was to be Catholic, adapted to all times, all nations, all circumstances. The absence of a revealed code of Ritual in the case of such a Church is easily accounted for. We do not conceive how it possibly could have been given. If a modifying power was necessary to the Jews to shape the revealed Ritual to varying national circumstances,—as we see, for example, from the acts of David and Solomon,—a more than modifying, a creative power, was necessary for the Christian Church—supposing that she was to possess a Ritual at all—to suit it to her many phases of civilisation and world-wide variety of circumstances. Supposing that Jesus Christ wished His Church to possess a splendid Ritual, since it was also His will that she should pass through ages of persecution, He could not have imposed it upon her in the Catacombs, but must have left her to create it in the days of her triumph.

Protestants seem to think it is an embarrassment to us that we do not find precedent or proof in the New Testament for every part of our religious ceremonial. On the contrary, we find everything that we could expect to find. There is nothing whatever either in the statements or the omissions of the Holy Scriptures out of harmony with the Catholic theory of Ritual. For if Jesus Christ intended His Church to have just such a worship as that of Catholics, He has done just what was necessary for it.

He Himself, either personally or by His apostles, established the essential rites of His religion. He sanctioned in His own life (as will be shown presently) certain general principles of worship, such as magnificence and symbolism. And then He left to His Church a Spirit, and conferred on her an authority, by which, on the basis of those rites, and in harmony with those principles, she might develop, according to circumstances, a complete ceremonial.

We have touched in this chapter on two of the arguments against Ritualism on which most stress is laid. The great positive argument is the declaration of Jesus Christ that His religion is spiritual. We have seen that this declaration can only be an argument against ceremony in the hands of those who are determined to beg the question at issue. The great negative argument is the absence of a revealed *code* of Ritual.

We have seen that this absence by itself can have no force as an objection, since it can be equally well accounted for on the Catholic hypothesis as on that of Protestants. Let us now see what proofs the Catholic Church can bring from the New Testament in favour of her manner of worshipping God.

It will not be necessary to inquire in this place into the nature and origin of the various rites that go to make up Catholic external worship. I need not suppose, either here or elsewhere, that my reader has a very intimate acquaintance with those rites. The opposition that the Church encounters is on account of certain general characteristics of her worship. It is these features, common to all or to many of her rites, that we are to discuss in the present part.

It is said that Catholic worship aims at splendour; that it is consequently unapostolic, and liable to abuse, even if not essentially wrong; that it is symbolic and consequently Jewish rather than Christian; and that it impedes rather than assists the worshipper by the multitude and obscurity of its ceremonies.

What does the New Testament say regarding all these things?

CHAPTER II.

SPLENDOUR.

AMONG the characteristics of Catholic worship, that which attracts the attention and criticism of strangers most easily is magnificence or splendour.

It is perfectly true that, according to Catholic teaching, splendour has a legitimate place in the worship of God. We hold that it is lawful and good at times to make impressions on the soul through the senses. But no Catholic ever considered magnificence as an essential or even ordinary quality of ceremonial. Such a notion may exist among Protestants; but I am at a loss to account for it, except from the fact that few Protestants ever witness Catholic worship, unless when they have been attracted by the rumour of some extraordinary function; or read of it, unless in the newspaper report of a solemnity. And yet they talk of pomp and pageantry, and gorgeous rites, and imposing ceremonial, and sensational effects, as if these were the staple of our everyday worship. If they wish to account for the hold which the Church retains on

the affections of a Catholic population, or her success in converting the heathen, the attractions of a gorgeous ceremonial are the ever-ready and adequate explanation. Now, I have undertaken to justify Catholic facts and principles, not the dreams of popular imagination ; so it is necessary to state what really are Catholic principles in this matter.

First, then, magnificence is not of the essence of worship at all, whether private or public. We know well that true spiritual worship may exist without grand or imposing ceremonies, and often without rites of any kind ; and that art and splendour may sometimes be unaccompanied by any interior piety.

We have no quarrel, therefore, with Dr Cumming, when he asserts that "forms and ceremonies, however graceful, beautiful, complicated, or ancient, do not *necessarily* create religious impressions of any sort, much less true and spiritual worship. We perfectly agree with him, that "the taste may be regaled, the senses may be charmed ; but when the bright vision has faded, there may not be left one single transforming or living impression produced upon the heart." How strange that so constant a preacher as Dr Cumming did not reflect that all this may be said with equal truth about preaching, and that it is said by St James when he speaks of the forgetful hearer, who contemplates Truth as a man may see his countenance in the mirror, and immediately

forgets the object that he gazed upon ; but it is as worthless an argument against ceremonial as it would be against preaching.

On the other hand, no Catholic ever thought of maintaining that splendour was necessary to true spiritual worship. We know that some of the truest worshippers God ever found poured out the homage of their hearts to Him "in deserts, in mountains, in dens, and in caves of the earth" (Heb. xi. 38). English, Scotch, and Irish Catholics would be the last of all men to deny this, since the persecution of their Protestant fellow-countrymen reduced them, till within the present century, to this very state ; and they doubt not but that the worship of their hunted forefathers was as acceptable to God as any they can now offer in their reconstructed sanctuaries.

It is admitted, then, on all hands, both that true spiritual worship may exist without the magnificence of external ceremonial, and that splendid rites may be performed without interior worship.

The question of Ritualism is not whether these things may be separated, but whether they are naturally united. Does interior piety naturally seek to ally itself to external ceremonial ? Does external ceremonial of its own nature foster interior piety ?

Mr Ruskin says that the Gothic cathedral, "with every stone that is laid on its solemn walls, raises some

human heart a step nearer heaven." He expresses, in a particular instance, that which is the theory of the Catholic Church with regard to all the objects and rites she employs. Is that theory true? Is it Christian?

Dr Cumming, on the other hand, asserts that, "in proportion as we increase the amount of ceremonial in public worship, in the same proportion we injure and deaden spiritual religion." Is this, rather, true Christian doctrine?

Such, in general terms, is the question at issue, and the appeal lies to the New Testament.

Protestants will not refuse the appeal. They think they have gained the victory if we attempt it. "Our Lord's whole life on earth," says one already quoted, "was conducted in the very simplest and plainest manner. Should we not try to imitate His walk, if we are really anxious for religion's sake to act rightly?"

"Nearly all the pictures of the Lord's public life," says Dr Vaughan, "place Him before us under lights which are moral and spiritual, rarely ever in connexion with anything simply of a ritual nature. This, by the way, is anything but the Christ which the Jewish fancy or imagination would have given us. But this too is what our better intelligence might lead us to expect in One who was about to declare that all such visibilities had served their purpose, and were about to come to an end. Who can imagine Him as taking a part in such

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garish pageantries as are now presented to us by men who would be accounted eminently reverential and Christian in their doings?"

I can partly understand that a Renan should speak in this tone, since he rejects all that is supernatural in the Gospel, and thinks that the Evangelists coloured, according to their Jewish prejudices, the records even of those events, as to the substance of which they are trustworthy witnesses; but I am indeed surprised that those who accept the four Gospels in their integrity, just as they are accepted by the Catholic Church, should be able to read them over and over again without remarking that, in spite of the humility and simplicity of our Blessed Lord's personal appearance, He is surrounded, from His birth to His ascension, by a ceremonial of God's own creation, so splendid that all the magnificence either of the Jewish Temple, or of the most solemn Catholic "functions," sinks into insignificance when compared with it.

There are two very different phases in the earthly life of the Son of God. The writers whom I have quoted seem to forget that that life has its glories as well as its humiliations. They have considered our Lord as worshipper, but they have neglected to contemplate Him as the Object of worship. They have seen that He worshipped in poverty, but they have not seen that He was worshipped in magnificence. They have sought to

draw an absolute rule from the poverty of Jesus Christ, which was a passing dispensation for our sake, while they ought to have seen that the true rule for Christian worship should be drawn from His glories, which are eternal.

I will speak in the next chapter of the "simplicity and poverty" on which so much stress has been laid; but, first, let me draw attention to the glorious phase of our Divine Master's earthly life, and see whether we cannot gather from it conclusions not only favourable to, but absolutely decisive of, the Ritualistic theory of worship.

We shall have to pass in review the whole earthly career of the Son of God.

How, then, was He first introduced into the world? The shepherds, says St Luke, were keeping their night-watches in the fields of Bethlehem, when an angel stood by them, and "the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear;" and while the angel was comforting them with the joyful news of their Saviour's birth, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest." St Matthew tells us how a miraculous star led the Eastern sages to the crib of Bethlehem, and how, when the holy pilgrims found the Divine Child, "they rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and falling down they adored

Him, and opening their treasures, offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." Now this is God's own Ritual of the Nativity; let us examine it. Is there no appeal here to the senses? Is there no splendour, no magnificence? Did "the brightness of God" shine for the mind only, or for the eyes as well? Did the angelic voices sing for the conscience only, or for the ears also? Were the great fear of the shepherds and the great joy of the magians mere sensuous excitement? In a word, do we gather from this narrative that men with flesh and blood are to forget that they have senses, in order to worship "in spirit and in truth?" On the contrary, we see that those angelic beings, who, by nature are pure spirits, clothe themselves with visible forms, and take human voices for no other purpose than to appeal to men's bodily senses, and so lift them up in a human way, to share their spiritual joy.

Nor are these miraculous appeals to sense confined to the birth of our Redeemer. They are the beginnings of a series which, though, of course, interrupted by His hidden life, glorifies His public ministry, His death, and resurrection.

St Mark tells us that our Blessed Lord entered upon His public ministry by receiving baptism from St John, and that, in addition to the ceremonies which the Baptist may have used, God accompanied this baptism

by a Ritual of His own. "Forthwith, coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit as a dove, descending, and remaining on Him; and there came a voice from heaven, Thou art My beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased." How full of wonders are these few words! But, let us confine our attention to the point at issue. On this occasion not only are the two senses of sight and hearing addressed, in order to inspire reverence for Jesus Christ, but this is done in the way most calculated to make a vivid and permanent impression. The reason given by Jesus Christ why God loves those who worship in spirit is that He is Himself a Spirit. Yet this ineffable Spirit not only causes the material sky to seem to open, as if that were His dwelling-place, but He speaks with a human voice, and deigns to appear under the shape and emblem of a Dove.

Again, in the Transfiguration on Mount Thabor, some of these same incidents were repeated, and other circumstances were introduced of a still more striking nature. The Transfiguration is a divine drama addressed to the imagination and feelings, for the purpose of confirming the faith, and hope, and adoration of the witnesses. Hence St John says: "We saw His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father" (John i. 14). And St Peter: We were "eye-witnesses of His majesty" when the voice came down from "the excellent glory." But this excellent glory was not

merely spiritual—"His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as snow," says St Matthew (xvii. 2). And St Mark still more emphatically: "His garments became shining, and exceeding white, as snow, so as no fuller upon earth can make white" (Mark ix. 2). And the cloud that overshadowed them was "a bright cloud" (Matt. xvii. 5).

Well, bright clouds and white glistening robes would, in modern language, be contemptuously called *sensational*: and so indeed they were, and were intended by God to work powerfully on the senses, the imagination, and the feelings of the witnesses. "They fell upon their face, and were very much afraid" (St Matt.) "And they were afraid," says St Luke, "when they entered into the cloud" (Luke ix. 34).

May we not apply to these two scenes the remark our Blessed Lord made on another occasion (John xii. 30), when a voice spoke to Him from heaven in presence of the multitude: "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes"? All this splendour was not necessary for Jesus Christ, but was given for the sake of His adorers.

Let us turn now to the history of our Blessed Lord's Passion. I will pass over, for the present, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and draw attention to the sensible signs that surrounded Mount Calvary with awe.

It is enough to refer to the darkness that was over

the earth "from the sixth to the ninth hour" (Matt. xxvii. 45); to the "loud voice" of our agonising Saviour, twice mentioned by the Evangelist (Matt. xxvii. 46, 50), and remarked on by the Apostle (Heb. v. 7); to the veil of the Temple rent from top to bottom; to the quaking of the earth, the splitting of the rocks, the opening of the tombs. Most certainly these signs were addressed to the senses, to the imagination, the feelings. They were God's own Ritual of the Passion; and they were exactly fitted to give rise to those strong emotions which are recorded as their effect. "The centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake, and the things that were done, were sore afraid, saying, Indeed this was the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 54). "And all the multitude that were come together to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned, *striking their breasts*" (Luke xxiii. 48).

A lecturer against Ritualism lately said in a published sermon: "All the tendencies of Roman Catholic worship are to produce a sensuous religion, not a spiritual. The glittering processions, the rich array of vestments, the low soft music, the incense-clouds filling the church with fragrant fumes; all this is of the earth, earthy. If men analyse their thoughts after visiting those places, they will find that if these be of Christ, their thoughts are ever about the Man who is

suffering, bleeding, dying,—a sensuous thought,—rather than about the grand idea of the Atonement.” Alas! well would it be if the crowds who, in England, go on Good-Friday to hear a Protestant sermon on “the grand idea” would return home “striking their breasts” with compunction, like the crowds who, in the Catholic Churches, have kissed the feet of the Crucifix, and who, while meditating on the grand *Fact* of the Passion, have by no means lost sight—how could they?—of the Atonement thereby accomplished.

The circumstances of the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord are of the same sensational character (if the word may be taken in a good sense) as those of the Nativity, Baptism, Transfiguration, and Passion.

We read, again, of a “great earthquake,” of an angel with a countenance as lightning, and raiment as snow, the fear of whom makes the guards become with terror as dead men (Matt. xxviii. 3, 4); of “two angels in white, sitting” in the sepulchre, “one at the head and one at the feet” (John xx. 12); of “two men in shining apparel” (Luke xxiv. 4); of “a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe” (Mark xvi. 5). So, too, at the Ascension we are told of the apparition of “two men in white garments” (Acts i. 10).

Since a good deal of lofty contempt is bestowed on what is termed ecclesiastical millinery, I beg my reader’s attention to this frequent allusion to the garments. In

another sermon against Ritualism a preacher says, "It is doing an injustice to God and offering an insult to man to tell him that he must observe vestments and postures." What an insult, according to this theory, must not God himself have offered to His angels, to tell them that they must not only assume the appearance of a human body, but see that their visionary vestments were white and shining, and remember to sit, not anyhow or anywhere, but, in one case, at the right side, in another, "one at the head and one at the feet"!

What an insult must not the Son of God have offered to His Heavenly Father and to His adoring disciples, when, in His Transfiguration, He took His "posture" between Moses and Elias, and caused His vesture to be "shining and exceeding white, as snow, so as no fuller upon earth can make white"! It is a dangerous thing for writers to set up their private judgment, in this dogmatic and flippant manner, against the tradition of Christendom.

Some kind of answer might, perhaps, be attempted to the preceding arguments on the plea that the disciples of Jesus Christ were still carnal, and that the Holy Ghost had not yet come. But to do away entirely with this evasion let us examine whether the day of Pentecost introduced any change in the method by which God had hitherto sought out true worshippers.

Jesus Christ is about to found a Church whose

worship should be in spirit and in truth. Let us see if there is any ceremonial in its dedication.

When Solomon dedicated his Temple, "fire came down from heaven, and the majesty of the Lord filled the house." According to the Protestant theory, such a display well befitted a temple built for a carnal religion, but would be entirely unsuitable to usher into the world a spiritual worship.

Was, then, the descent of the Spirit accompanied by purely spiritual phenomena? No; the day of Pentecost has a Ritual of its own, not inferior in splendour to those of the Nativity or Resurrection. It is enough to refer to the "sound from heaven as of a mighty wind," and the "parted tongues as it were of fire" (Acts ii. 2, 3). Never were deeper impressions made on the soul through the senses than on that day, when pure spiritual worship was finally and fully established.* On that day, too,

* The learned Canon Townsend makes the following remarks on the phenomena of Pentecost :—

"In the former dispensation, at the day of Pentecost, God gave his law on Mount Sinai, with thunder and lightning, fire, storm and tempest, with all the awful demonstrations of an offended Deity. In the fulness of time, at the feast of Pentecost, God again manifested Himself, and revealed a more perfect law—on both occasions circumstances characteristic of the peculiar nature of the law were observed—the same divine power was demonstrated, but in the latter instance divested of its terrors. On both occasions the presence of God was manifested by the sound of rushing winds supernaturally excited, by fire descending from heaven, and, as some suppose, by sudden thunder.

"In the Jewish Tabernacle God testified His acceptance of the first sacrifice that was offered on the holy altar by the descent of fire from heaven. When Christ made a sacrifice of his body on the altar of the

St Peter quoted the prophecy of Joel, in which the nature of the Church of Christ is sketched from Pentecost to the end of the world; and those must read Scripture very carelessly who fail to observe that immediately after God has said, "It shall come to pass, in the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," He adds, "And I will show wonders in the heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath,—*blood and fire and vapour of smoke*" (Acts ii. 17, 19). Sensational elements certainly!

That these wonders, these striking appeals to the senses, are not reserved merely for the terror of unbelievers at the last day, is proved by the events of Pentecost, and by a thousand histories recorded in the annals of the Church. Several examples occur in the Acts of the Apostles. On one occasion, when the Disciples prayed, "the place was moved wherein they were assembled" (Acts iv. 31). On another, the shadow of St Peter heals the sick (Acts v. 15). On another, the face of St Stephen appears "like that

cross, thereby abolishing all burnt offerings of bulls and goats, the Apostles, as priests and ministers of His new covenant, as the living sacrifices acceptable to God, received a similar token of divine approbation, by fire from heaven resting upon them in the form of fiery tongues. Thus are all the mysteries of Omnipotence shadowed out as "through a glass darkly," and thus, may we not suppose that the last revelation given to man by St John typifies, in like manner, those eternal realities of the New Jerusalem of which we can form no higher idea than the Jews of old entertained of the glorious privileges and blessings of which we are now the happy partakers in the Christian dispensation."

of an angel" (Acts vi. 15). On another, "a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shines round about Saul, and those in company with him" (Acts xxvi. 13). On another, a light shines in the prison, and the chains fall from the hands of St Peter (Acts xii. 7). On another, a great earthquake shakes the foundation of the prison while Paul and Silas are praising God (Acts xvi. 26). I pass over, with a mere allusion, the signs which shall precede the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has Himself drawn out what I will again venture to call the Ritual of the Day of Judgment, in a picture that no one can forget. He has told us that "plain and simple" as was His first appearance, He will then come "in the clouds of heaven, with much power and majesty" (Matt. xxiv. 30).

After this rapid summary of the history of the Son of God, I will simply recall the strange statement of Dr Vaughan:—"Nearly all the pictures of our Lord's public life place Him before us under lights which are moral and spiritual, rarely ever in connexion with anything simply of a Ritual nature. Who can imagine Him as taking a part in such garish pageantries as are now presented to us by men who would be accounted eminently reverential and Christian in their doings?"

Were I an infidel, I should reply, "Your Gospels,

at all events, are filled with 'garish pageantries!'" But being a Catholic, I answer, in the name of the Catholic Church, "Search the Scriptures, for you *think* in them to have life everlasting ; and the same are they that give testimony of Me" (John v. 39). For, to apply, in a few words, all that we have been reading to the question of Christian worship, I may ask, is it reasonable to suppose that "the last days"—the days of the knowledge and worship of Jesus Christ—shall open with such emphatic and multiplied Ritualism as that which glorified our Lord's first appearance on earth, and should close with such ceremonies as those which shall usher in and accompany His second advent ; and that, during the whole intermediate period, rites and ceremonial, art and splendour, should be considered as the attributes of "a sensuous religion, not a spiritual" ?

Without going beyond the pages of the New Testament, we have found that God himself made use of appeals to the senses and imagination far more striking, more splendid, more gorgeous than any which have been at the command of the Catholic Church, in the grandest function that was ever celebrated beneath the dome of St Peter's. What, indeed, are silken vestments, jewelled mitres, peals of the organ, blaze of tapers, clouds of incense, or any other means used to impress the worshipper in the richest

cathedral of Christendom, compared with the bright clouds, glistening raiment, heavenly voices, dazzling splendours, splitting of rocks, great earthquakes and mighty winds, which are some of the elements of God's own Ritual of the New Testament?

CHAPTER III.

APOSTOLIC WORSHIP.

BEFORE I proceed further in my subject, I must remove a difficulty,—the fundamental difficulty in the whole matter. It is Carlyle, I think, who says that an argument is not complete until we have not only refuted the error of our opponent, but shown also how he came by it.

How, then, in the very teeth, so to say, of all that I have related from the New Testament, did Protestants come by their theory of Simplicity?

I have already indicated the answer in the preceding chapter. They have taken a very partial view of our Blessed Lord's life; they have considered Him as a worshipper only, not as One worshipped; and they have forgotten that He was a worshipper under entirely exceptional or abnormal circumstances.

Why will not Protestants allow us to draw any conclusion from the nature of the worship our Divine Master offered in the Temple, or the ceremonies at which He then assisted?

Because, they say, All this was transitory. Our Lord, and even His Apostles, lived in exceptional times. The old law was not yet fully abrogated. He was made under the law that He might set us free from the law. Even after it ceased to be obligatory and was dead, it was not at once dead. Therefore Jesus Christ could go up to the feasts and celebrate the Passover. Peter and John could go up into the Temple at the ninth hour of prayer (Acts iii. 1). Paul could shave his head in Cenchreæ because he had a vow (Acts xviii. 18), and make oblations and purifications in Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 26). But it by no means follows that Christians can now do any of these things; for the times have changed, and we take example from the normal, not from the exceptional, phases of the lives of our Lord and His Apostles.

This, I think, would be the Protestant answer, and I admit it in all points; and now I put an analogous question:—Why do not Catholics draw a precedent from the humility and poverty in which our Blessed Lord and the first Christians worshipped?

I reply—Because their circumstances were transitory and exceptional. They were exceptional as regards the old worship, and they were no less exceptional as regards the worship that was to take its place. If the ancient form of worship was not yet completely abo-

lished, neither was the new form of worship fully inaugurated. If, then, no valid argument may be drawn in favour of a splendid Ritual from the exceptional or transitory circumstances under which our Blessed Lord and His Apostles conformed to the service of the Temple, certainly no valid argument can be drawn against magnificence in external worship from those exceptional and transitory circumstances under which our Blessed Lord and His first disciples worshipped apart from the Temple—circumstances which made splendour naturally impossible.

The mere fact of external simplicity in primitive worship has no force as a lesson, until it can be proved to have been the result of free choice, and not of necessity.

The only worship of which we read in the New Testament—apart from the supernatural events which I have related, and apart from the worship of the Jews—was offered up to God in streets and market-places, in private houses (Acts ii. 46), or in upper chambers (Acts xx. 8.)

The first Christians were poor and persecuted; art and riches were not at their disposal.

Now, when Catholics were hunted into back-rooms or mountain caves; or when their poverty could only erect a thatched chapel with a mud floor (as was the case in Ireland till lately), their worship was as far

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from being "gorgeous," as that of St Peter and St John can be supposed to have been.

Would any one conclude that those poor Irish or English Catholics did not approve of a more elaborate and magnificent Ritual? Would any one who should witness a grander ceremonial in the Metropolitan church of Dublin, or in the pro-cathedral of Kensington, reproach us with departing from the simplicity of our ancestors?

Well, just as poverty and persecution are the explanation of the meagre external worship of two centuries ago in these countries, so also are poverty and persecution a sufficient explanation of whatever may seem deficient in Ritualism in the worship mentioned in the New Testament.

Protestants may not be willing to accept this explanation, yet they have no right to assume the truth of their own theory without proof.

I remarked that it was a pure begging of the question to interpret our Blessed Lord's praise of spirituality into a condemnation of ceremonial. So now I maintain that it is begging the question a second time to interpret the necessary want of splendour of Apostolic worship into a studious choice of simplicity, and a condemnation of Ritual.

It cannot be said that I also am begging the question when I attribute this plainness to necessity; for before

doing so I have given, as I conceive, abundant proof that the utmost splendour of worship, the most elaborate use of external means to cause spiritual impressions and emotions, are the very characteristics of the Christian dispensation; and that, far from finding a difficulty in associating the person of our Blessed Lord with pomp and magnificence, it is impossible to recall the memory of the most touching scenes of His life apart from those associations.

Thus, then, Catholics have the legitimate possession of their interpretation of those phases of our Lord's life which may seem in any way contrary to the principles of Ritualism. They have a right to attribute them to necessity rather than choice, and the burden of proof lies on Protestants, if they wish to give another interpretation in harmony with their theories.

There is a second and still clearer proof that ours is the true view of primitive worship.

When a man omits an action under circumstances which render it impossible, we may be doubtful whether he does so from choice or from compulsion.

But if he is no sooner free than he does what he before omitted, we then have good reason to judge that he would have done it before had he not been prevented.

This is exactly the case of the Christian Church. All admit that there was little splendour in the Apos-

tolitic worship. How is this to be accounted for? Was it wanting because of the necessities of the times, or was it deliberately rejected as unspiritual? To determine this question we may consider how the Church acted as soon as she was free to act according to her own desires and instincts.

Whatever opinion may be formed of the worship of the Catacombs, it is certain that no sooner was the pressure of persecution removed from the early Church, than in every country throughout the world she developed her worship with a splendour identical with that which Catholics approve and Protestants denounce. How was this? Protestants are obliged to explain it by another gratuitous assumption—by maintaining that in days of persecution the worship of the early Christians was less splendid by free choice, and that, on the cessation of persecution they were universally unfaithful to the principles of true spiritual worship, for which they had endured so much, and adopted from Paganism the *sensuous* worship which for three centuries they had loathed. Is this reasonable? Is it not more natural to suppose that this development was the result of principles which they had held from the beginning, but till now had been unable fully to apply?

It should be remembered that the apparent plainness of Apostolic worship is one of the Protestant's *main* arguments against Ritualism. This is the ground of

those appeals to a "common-sense" reading of the Gospels, to prove that Ritualism has no part in true Christian worship. I can easily believe that the Pharisees urged this very same "common-sense" reading of the prophets to prove that Jesus Christ could not be the Messiah. The word "common-sense" means in both cases "superficial." The Scriptures must be not only read, but *searched*, before they give up their true character.

The magnificent descriptions of the prophets were fulfilled in a Messiah whose life was humble and persecuted; the humble, persecuted Church which He founded, and the beginnings of which we read in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, developed into a kingdom that has filled the earth, and in which that humble and persecuted Messiah is worshipped as the King of Glory, with all that earth can offer Him most rich and glorious.

There is no more contradiction in the one case than in the other; indeed, whatever apparent contradiction there is in either case is explained and removed by bringing the two together.

There is a strange, perplexing contrast at first sight between the glorious Christ of prophecy and the humble Christ of the Gospel; and there is a similar contrast between the humble Christ who worships in the Gospel and the glorious Christ who is wor-

shipped in the Catholic Church. The first contrast scandalised the Jews, the second contrast scandalises Protestants. I have endeavoured in the preceding chapter to remove the scandal by showing that, to an attentive reader of the Gospels, the very same contrast is found there also. There is the Christ persecuted by Herod and the Christ worshipped by the Magi ; the Christ of Thabor and the Christ of Calvary ; and yet these are not two Christs, but one Christ ; and to know that one Christ truly we must know Him in His glories as well as in His abasements. We must know Him, not only in his voluntary humiliation, but in the splendours of Old Testament prophecy, the splendours of New Testament miracles, and the splendours of Catholic Ritual.

There will be an opportunity to develop these observations when I come to compare symbolic language with symbolic rites,* and to show how Catholic worship is the foreseen reparation of our divine Redeemer's abasements.†

For the present I take leave of this subject, and pass on to another difficulty, which, though it is not drawn from the New Testament, and therefore not properly within my limits, is too important to be passed over without, at least, a few words of explanation.

* Part I., c. vi.

† Part III., c. vii.

CHAPTER IV.

SUPPOSED DANGER OF ABUSE.

THERE are many whose heart and whose reason are disposed to admit the fitness and excellence of the use of art and wealth to produce beauty, and even a certain degree of splendour, in the public worship of God, yet they shrink from the danger of abuse.

They are so afraid that the senses, being charmed with beautiful sights and harmonious sounds, may cause the soul of the worshipper to rest in what is merely external, that they think it safer to avoid whatever can be called magnificent or splendid. Hence the charge of *excess* so often brought against the pomp of some Catholic ceremonies. Hence the boast of decency and sobriety so frequently made in favour of such a modified Ritual as that of the Anglican Church.

Now, it would be uncandid to deny the possibility of the abuse of ceremonial ; and were I even disposed to do so, innumerable passages in Catholic writers warn-

ing Catholics against this abuse would at once convict me of insincerity.

But admitting readily, as I do, the possibility and the actual occurrence of the misuse of Ritual, I deny that the danger is so urgent or so frequent as to demand more than ordinary safeguards, or such as to justify the abandonment of Ritual itself.

Seeing on the one hand the terrific charges brought against Catholic worship by some Protestants, and the anxious fears expressed about it by others; and knowing, by a pretty wide experience of several countries, how utterly baseless are such charges and such fears, I have often called to mind a saying of Digby, in his "Compitum":—"Here is such ado to make no stain a stain as passes colouring; but to find the reason we must dig till we arrive at the discovery of this fact in psychology, that the chief distinguishing feature of Protestantism, as it exists, is not any particular error against articles of faith, though it may, in its different sections, deny every one of them, but that ugly treason of mistrust, which generates a general, radical, and insuperable disposition of mind, amounting to the kind of insanity that mistook windmills for giants, to suspect and doubt, and misinterpret and malign the intention of the illiterate poor of the Catholic Church, as if it was reserved for a gentleman tourist, one of Shakespeare's shallow fools, fresh from his *Quarterly Re-*

view, to discover or redress some disgusting and heinous contraventions of truth and justice, which the wisdom of such persons as Louis of Granada, Dionysius the Carthusian, St Theresa, St Charles Borromeo, 'the old Christian Charlemagne,' St Louis, and all the greatest and holiest intelligences of the ancient Catholic civilisation, either could not or would not detest and denounce."

Yet, for the sake, not of these pedantic critics, but of sincere Protestants anxious for the purity of God's worship, I would remark, that the beauties and glories of Nature have been abused and turned from their true purpose, which is to teach us of God, a thousand times more frequently than the splendour of Ritual; and yet, does any one condemn that glorious spectacle of Nature as dangerous? Does any one counsel us to turn our eyes from it, or use it very *soberly*, lest it should ensnare our souls? No: for it is easily understood, that however frequent may have been this perversion, it is to the corruption of men's hearts alone, and not to the grandeur of God's works, that it must be attributed. "For all men are vain," says the author of the "Book of Wisdom," "in whom there is not the knowledge of God; for by the greatness of the beauty and of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby" (Wisdom, xiii. 1-5).

Why then should the possibility, rather than the

frequency of abuse, make men mistrust so much a Ritual which teaches much more directly and explicitly of God than the grandeur of the mountains or the fertility of the plains?

I find men, whose testimony I cannot call in question, using very similar language of the effects produced in the soul by the spectacle of one of God's mighty works, and that of Catholic ceremonial. An accomplished traveller thus describes the impression made on him by the first sight of the Falls of Niagara :—"The spectator at first feels as if stricken with catalepsy. His blood ceases to flow, or rather, is sent back in overpowering pressure on the heart. He gasps, like a drowning man, to catch a mouthful of breath. All elements of soul and sense are absorbed in the magnitude and glory of one single object. The past and future are obliterated, and he stands mute and powerless, in the presence of that scene of awful splendour on which his gaze is riveted. . . .

"The objects presented by Niagara are undoubtedly among those which exercise a permanent influence on the imagination of the spectator. The day—the hour—the minute—when his eye first rested on the great Horse-shoe Fall, is an epoch in the life of any man. He has received an impression which time cannot diminish, and death only can efface. The result of that single moment will extend through a lifetime,

enlarge the sphere of thought, and influence the whole tissue of his moral being.”*

On this passage I would remark, that no one would accuse the author of it of being “sensuous.” No one would find fault with him for yielding his soul to the influence of the senses. He himself sees no necessity for caution or sobriety—he does not blame nature as excessive.

Why then should there be so much suspicion of the impressions produced by the ceremonies of the Holy Church? They are not of the overwhelming nature of those just described; but they are as deep, while they are more intellectual and far more spiritual.

But I am so anxious to meet this objection face to face, in order to show its utter emptiness, that, at the risk of being tedious, I will enter more deeply into the comparison I have instituted. I will choose two descriptions, each a masterpiece in its kind, of a solemnity of the Catholic Church, and of a sublime natural spectacle. Few have felt more keenly, or described more eloquently, the beauty of the Church’s ceremonial than the late Cardinal Wiseman. The following passage is taken from his essay on “Minor Rites and Offices.” He is describing the devotion called Exposition, or the Forty-Hours’ Prayer.

“The church,” he says, “is richly adorned with

* Hamilton, “Men and Manners in America,” p. 405.

tapestry and hangings, while the daylight is excluded, not so much to give effect to the brilliant illumination round the altar, as to concentrate and direct attention towards that which is upon it, and make It, like the Lamb in heaven, the lamp and sun, the centre of light and glory to the surrounding sanctuary. After a solemn mass, and a procession, the Blessed Sacrament is enshrined and enthroned above the altar. Around it is disposed, as it were, a firmament of countless lights, radiating from it, symbolical of the ever-wakeful host of heaven, the spirits of restless life and unfading brightness, that keep watch round the seat of glory above. At the foot of the altar kneel immovable, in silent adoration, the priests of the sanctuary, relieving each other day and night, pouring the prayers of the people, as fragrant odours, before it. But look at the body of the church! No pews, no benches, or other incumbrances are there; but the flood of radiance from the altar seems to be poured out upon the marble pavement, and to stream along it to the very door. But not during the day will you see it thus: the whole, except during the hours of repose, is covered with kneeling worshippers. Looking at the scene through the eye of memory, comes nearer to the contemplation of a heavenly vision than aught else that we know. It seems to us as though, on these occasions, flesh and blood lost their material grossness, and were spiritualised as they

passed the threshold. Softly and noiselessly is the curtain raised which covers the door, and passed uplifted from hand to hand in silent courtesy, as a succession of visitors enter in ; they who in the street just now were talking so loud, and laughing so merrily, how they steal in, with slow pace and gentle tread, as though afraid to break upon the solemnity of the scene ! For before and around them are scattered, without order or arrangement, persons singly or in groups, as they have entered in, all lowly kneeling, all reflecting upon their prayerful countenances the splendour from the altar ; and as they pass among them to find place, with what careful and quiet steps they thread their way, so as least to disturb those among whom they move ; and then drop down upon their knees too, in the first open space, upon the same bare stone floor, princess and peasant, priest and layman, all equal in the immeasurable distance between them and the eternal object of their adoration. In no other time or place is the sublimity of our religion so touchingly felt. No ceremony is going forward in the sanctuary, no sound of song is issuing from the choir, no voice of exhortation proceeds from the pulpit, no prayer is uttered aloud at the altar. There are hundreds there, and yet they are engaged in no congregational act of worship. Each heart and soul is alone in the midst of a multitude—each uttering its own thoughts, each feeling its own grace. Yet are you

overpowered, subdued, quelled into a reverential mood, softened into a devotional spirit, forced to meditate, to feel, to pray. The little children who come in, led by a mother's hand, kneel down by her in silence, as she simply points towards the altar, overawed by the still splendour before them: the very babe seems hushed to quiet reverence on her bosom. The hurried passer-by, who merely looks in, cannot resist the impulse to sink, if only in a momentary genuflexion, upon his knees; nay, even the English scoffer, who will face anything else, will not venture to stalk, as elsewhere, up the nave, heedless of others' sacred feelings, but must needs remain under the shelter of the doorway, or steal behind the shadow of the first pillar, if he wishes to look on without partaking."

Let the candid Protestant distinguish here between the object and the form of worship. I am not now vindicating the former, but the latter. The question here is not whether Jesus Christ be present or not in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; whether it be right or not thus to bow down in adoration in presence of that sacrament; but whether Catholics, believing as they do, are right in having recourse to these external helps of lights and darkness, silence and seclusion, in order to assist those interior feelings of recollection and of awe which their faith tells them to be due, but which, as a general rule, without some external helps, are difficult

to sustain. Is there any practical danger (such is the question at issue) that the worshipper will let his thoughts rest in the candles and flowers without reaching the Object of faith, of which candles and flowers are intended to remind him? or that his admiration will be so engrossed by the work of the sacristan as to forget the work of God's power and love, which is the proper Object of his marvel? I believe such danger is merely chimerical; I believe that most Catholics will have taken part in that act of worship, and have been influenced by the external objects in their devotion, almost without being conscious of that influence. I cannot explain this state of mind better than in words descriptive of the effect on the soul of the grandeurs of Nature. The passage is from Coleridge's splendid hymn, composed at the foot of Mount Blanc:—

“O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought; entranced in prayer
I worshipp'd the Invisible alone.
Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swell'd vast to Heaven!”

Now I say without hesitation, that while out of a thousand gazers on Mount Blanc there will not be more than one or two who will lift their souls from that

spectacle to the majesty of the Invisible God,—of a thousand Catholics who enter the church during the Forty-Hours' Adoration, not more than one or two, if even one, will be so engrossed with what meets the eye, as *not* to rise from it to the contemplation of the Hidden Presence.

• It requires, perhaps, the intellect and the refined poetic feeling of a Coleridge to "pass into the mighty vision" of the mountain he was gazing on, to gaze with such intense feeling that the very object which excites his thought "vanishes from his thought," until he worships the Invisible alone.

And yet, I know no words by which the effect of a really magnificent Catholic ceremony, not on the gifted few, but on the great multitude, could be more correctly described, than those of Coleridge.

The *Ritual* is blending with their thought,—

"Yea, with their life and life's own secret joy,
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swells vast to Heaven!"

If any doubt the truth of my words, he has but to test them by going to the nearest Catholic chapel the next time the Forty-Hours' Prayer is announced, and there watching for one half hour the conduct of the Catholic worshippers, whether they are men or women, whether they belong to the educated classes, or are the simplest of the unlettered poor.

Or if he wishes to judge by reason and reflection, rather than by experience, let him consider whether it was not thus the worshippers were affected in those glorious "pageantries" of the New Testament, which I recalled in the last chapter.

Did God fear that the brilliancy of the star would beguile the Magi from the hidden glory of the Divine Babe? or that the darkness of Mount Calvary would obscure in the souls of the witnesses their sense of the crime committed? If not, why should we fear for the effect of Ritual on Christian hearts?

But I would add another observation regarding this supposed danger. It is scarcely fair of Protestants to judge of Catholics by themselves. Our belief is not theirs. We believe in a Divine Presence in our churches and sacred ceremonies of which they know nothing. It matters not here whether that belief be true or false. It *is* our belief; and, therefore, influences our feelings in our worship in a manner of which Protestants have no experience.

This was remarked by the German Protestant Menzel. "Everything depends," he says, "in the Protestant form of worship, upon the preacher for the time being. For the Catholic, all his churches are alike, and he conducts his devotion without the priest, as it makes but little difference what priest officiates. Hence there prevails, if I may so say, an

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undisturbed equanimity of devotion everywhere among Catholics.”*

An eloquent Catholic writer, from whom I have borrowed this quotation, adds some reflections which exactly harmonise with what I have already said.

“If there be in the world,” he writes, “a class of men who, in a certain sense, are absolutely indifferent to ceremonial, although obliged to use it, and who in celebrating the mysteries of their holy religion, are almost unconscious of its presence, the Catholic belongs to that class. Whether he assists at the Holy Sacrifice, which constitutes the chief act of his religion, or at any other of the divine offices which attract him with irresistible power to the house of prayer, his eye and heart are fixed, not on sensible objects, but on that Awful Presence, which at one time is veiled in the Tabernacle, at another manifested to the gaze of the faithful. Vestments, music, and incense—whatever meets the eye or ear—he hardly notes, for there is something there which speaks to the soul, and taxes all its powers. Let the accompanying ceremonial be meagre or imposing, it is with the mind of a Christian, not of an artist, that he marks its presence; all he asks is, that it shall not distract him; the rest, in the presence of those stupendous mysteries, is of little import. Like Mary and Salome, he is thinking of

* “German Literature,” by Menzel, vol. i. p. 147 (ed. Felton).

the body which he has come to adore, not of the "sweet spices" which he has brought to anoint it. He provides, indeed, out of reverent love, the "fine linen," the "myrrh and aloes," and whatever else his devotion may inspire or the Church appoint, for in this august action she leaves nothing to human caprice or invention; but all these accessories of his worship, from the least to the greatest,—the cloud of incense, the blazing lights, the swelling choir, and the jewelled robes,—have no worth and no significance but as offerings to Him who gives them all their value by deigning to accept them."*

Yes; what the Catholic Church aims at in all her Ritual is that her children "be not distracted" from the object of their worship. They would be liable to distraction if there was nothing which met their senses in harmony with Him on whom their minds are fixed. Therefore the Church tries to exclude those things which would remind the worshipper of his ordinary occupations, cares, and pleasures; and she surrounds him with whatever can recall the words, the actions, the sufferings, the humiliations, the glories, the Presence of Jesus Christ.

The worshipper would be "distracted" if the appointed Ritual were carried out with irreverence, slovenliness, or want of taste on the part of the minis-

* "Christian Missions," by T. W. M. Marshall, vol. ii. c. iv.

ters of the sanctuary ; and this is a danger which has often given occasion to the legislation of Synods, and excited the zeal of the Church's doctors and reformers. But the Church has not found that excessive splendour distracted the mind or heart from Jesus Christ ; because no splendour can be excessive or incongruous where He is its object ; and, therefore, the Church has not deemed it necessary to admonish or to legislate on a danger which was but imaginary.

Again, Protestants are liable to mistake the effect of Catholic Ritual on Catholics, because they judge of it by the effect it produces on themselves. It is to them so new, and therefore so strange, that, like all novelties, it produces an exaggerated effect. It distracts them, it makes worship impossible to them, because they do not understand it, cannot follow it, or take any part in it. To *them* it is not a help, but a perplexity and an obstacle. Is it fair to suppose that Catholics are affected in this way ? To them all is familiar, simple, natural ; what they have been accustomed to from their infancy, and trained both to understand and to use. No Protestant need take my word for this ; for he has but to enter a Catholic church, and to contrast the quiet and devout demeanour of the Catholic congregation, with the anxious, frightened, perplexed, or scornful looks and attitudes of the little knot of Protestant gazers,

who will probably be gathered near the church door.

And once more; Protestants have no right to judge of Ritual among Catholics from what is now going on among a certain section of Anglicans. They are contending for Ritual, and their efforts are resisted. Hence the subject has been brought into a prominence which it does not occupy with us. I do not say that an exaggerated importance has been attached to it; but during a time of controversy it is likely to be *relatively* exaggerated. With Catholics, the principles and practice of Ritual are part of the ancient tradition of the Church; and as with everything settled and on which all are agreed, it scarcely excites the attention of Catholics at all. The Catholic priest is quietly instructed in his duty, and the Catholic layman bestows few thoughts upon the subject.

And besides all this, in the Catholic Church everything is regulated by authority. Public attention is not aroused by the eccentricities of individual clergymen. Congregations are not thrown into confusion by rites they have never before witnessed, and of which they neither know the origin nor the meaning.

We believe that Ritual is something supernatural, considered by God worthy of His own direct regulation in the old Dispensation, and of His no less real though indirect regulation in the Christian Church, through

the Holy Spirit that dwells in her. Hence the Fathers of the Council of Trent pronounced an anathema against all who should say that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church may be despised or omitted at the option of the priests, or may be changed by any pastor of the churches. "A most important and incalculably beneficial sentence," remarks Digby, "which delivers Catholic piety from being at the mercy of weak, ignorant, though well-meaning men, who, in proportion to their weakness and ignorance, are generally vain of being reformers or modifiers of ancient things."*

These considerations, it is hoped, will help to remove from the minds of Protestants those excessive apprehensions of abuse which prevent them from giving a calm attention to the lessons of the New Testament concerning Ritual.

But perhaps also these apprehensions would be mitigated by an impartial inquiry into the effects of the abandonment of Ritual in Protestant churches. Has the experience of the last three centuries gone to confirm the theory that a spiritual worship is the ordinary result of a religion shorn of all splendour? It would not be fair to give a Catholic's answer to this question. It is not, however, a Catholic, but the Protestant Menzel, who says, "The characteristic badge of

* "Mores Catholici," book v. c. ii.

the Protestant world is religious indifference," and who attributes this to the fact that "people regard the preacher alone, because nothing else in the Protestant Church attracts attention."*

It is not a picture of a very spiritual worship that Professor Wilson draws, when he notices how incense has been rejected by Protestants. The passage is slightly satirical, yet it is the good-natured satire of a friend. "It is difficult for us," he says, by *us* meaning I suppose Presbyterians, "to realise the immense difference between ancient and modern feeling and practice in reference to the use of perfumes; but we may imagine the emotions with which a Hebrew of the days of Aaron, or Solomon, or Herod, would worship in one of our Protestant churches. It would startle him to find that the ear had become the most religious of the senses; that the eye was scarcely appealed to except to guide the ear, and that the nostril was not invited to take any part whatever in the service. He would be inclined to apply to the worshippers the words which one of his great poets applies to the gods of the heathen,—‘Noses have they, and they smell not;’ till, looking round, he chanced to observe, that though the priest bore no censer, many of the female worshippers carried in their hands certain misshapen crystal vessels, which from time to time

* "German Literature," vol. i. p. 147 (ed. Felton).

they offered to their nostrils, with the effect of rousing them to an animation such as the most eloquent passages of the preacher often failed to provoke. Yes, that is the only religious use the moderns make of perfumes! and I leave you to picture to yourselves the contrast between the Hebrew altar of incense sending its rolling clouds of fragrant smoke to heaven, and a modern church smelling-bottle or snuff-box passed from hand to hand along a row of sleepy worshippers on a drowsy summer afternoon.”*

It seems, however, that there is another kind of incense not unknown in Protestant churches; offered, moreover, not to the Creator, but to the creature. The following contrast between Catholic and Protestant worship in New Orleans is from the pen of another Scotch gentleman, Mr Hamilton, who says, “I am not a Catholic, but I cannot suffer prejudice of any sort to prevent my doing justice,” &c.

“Both Catholic and Protestant,” says this candid traveller, “agree in the tenet that all men are equal in the sight of God; but the former alone gives practical exemplification of his creed. In a Catholic church the prince and the peasant, the slave and his master, kneel before the same altar, in temporary oblivion of all worldly distinctions. They come there but in one character—that of sinners; and no rank is felt or

* “Five Gateways of Knowledge,” p. 68.

acknowledged but that connected with the offices of religion. *Within these sacred precincts the vanity of the rich man receives no incense*—the proud are not flattered, the humble are not abashed. The stamp of degradation is obliterated from the forehead of the slave when he beholds himself admitted to community of worship with the highest and noblest of the land.

“But in Protestant churches a different rule prevails. People of colour are either excluded altogether, or are mewed up in some remote corner, separated by barriers from the body of the church. It is impossible to forget their degraded condition even for a moment. It is brought home to their feelings in a thousand ways. No white Protestant would kneel at the same altar with a black one. He asserts his superiority everywhere, and the very hue of his religion is affected by the colour of his skin. Can it be wondered, therefore, that the slaves in Louisiana are all Catholics; that while the congregation of the Protestant church consists of a few ladies, arranged in well-cushioned pews, the whole floor of the extensive Catholic cathedral should be crowded with worshippers of all colours and classes.”*

I will only add, in conclusion, that perhaps in facts like these might be found an answer to a question which a few years ago was much discussed in Protestant circles—why in England working-men do not go to church?

* “Men and Manners in America.”

Have they not felt in England, like the negroes in America, that in Protestant churches, though no incense is offered to God, too much is offered by the congregation to the preacher, and by the preacher to the congregation?

If this is not so universally, still there is a greater danger of this abuse than of the abuse of Ritual.

CHAPTER V.

SYMBOLISM.

IN order to treat properly the worship of the New Testament in its relation to Ritual, we must carefully distinguish the different aspects which Ritual may bear. Hitherto we have been considering only that feature of Catholic ceremonial which may be called Splendour, Grandeur, or Magnificence. But by far the greater number of the Church's rites have no pretension to this quality.

The ordinary administration of the sacraments, the ordinary prayers and benedictions of the Church, have nothing in them of the nature of splendour.

There are parishes, and even whole countries, where the Catholic worshippers never saw a ceremony to which the epithets grand or imposing could with any propriety be given. It is really a ludicrous mistake on the part of many English writers to fancy that the senses and souls of Catholics are dazzled and subdued by a constant round of magnificent rites. Sir Emerson Ten-

ment, in order to account for the attachment of the natives of Ceylon to the Catholic faith, says : " Their imaginations were excited, and their tastes permanently captivated, by striking ceremonial and pompous pageantry."

This is really a singular theory. Why, even a child would grow weary of a Christmas pantomime, if obliged to witness it every day for a month. Are there, then, savages of human kind in any part of the world whose imagination and tastes can be " permanently captivated" by a mere monotonous display of pompous pageantry, which, when disconnected from doctrine and the feelings which spring from belief in doctrine, would not possess even the interest of theatrical display ?

But facts are no less opposed to such theories than philosophy. I will quote here the commentary which the author of " Christian Missions" makes on the words just quoted.

" Does Sir Emerson Tennent," he asks, " suppose that Father Joseph Vaz, for example, when a fugitive in the swamps and jungles of Ceylon, converted thirty thousand idolators by ' pompous pageantry ' ? Did St Francis Xavier, whose ecclesiastical apparatus was limited to a hand-bell and a catechist, convert seven hundred thousand souls by ' gaudy ceremonial ' ? Did the venerable John de Britto gain his tens of thousands in the forests of Marava by the splendour of an imposing Ritual ?

Was it by the aid of such accessories that the martyred apostles of China and Corea, whose churches were huts and their vestments rags, won their triumphs? Was it 'pageantry' which rescued 1,500,000 South American Indians from the worship of demons? Was it 'Ritual' which caused the Holy Name to be adored on the banks of Lake Huron, by the borders of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and again, at a later date, in the plains of Oregon and the valleys of the Rocky Mountains? Is it by a 'gaudy ceremonial' that the Franciscans are at this moment renewing their ancient victories in the far interior of Brazil, or the Lazarists in Syria, or the Jesuits in Columbia, or the Marists in the islands of the Pacific?"

I may add, has it been by means of a splendid Ritual that the Church has retained her hold on the affections of the Irish nation? Those Celtic souls are certainly not insensible to the impressions of the imagination and yet, for three hundred years have they worshipped the God of their forefathers in the bog or on the mountain-side, in the thatched hut or the slated "house" with its mud floor; and generations after generations have passed away of confessors or martyrs to the Catholic faith, without having witnessed even the solemnity of a High Mass or seen the incense ascend at Vespers.

There is, however, another kind of Ritualism very

different from what we have been considering. It makes use of the senses indeed, but not to impress them; they merely serve as instruments to convey ideas to the mind.

To illustrate what I mean from Protestant worship,—singing and instrumental music may be said to belong to the first kind of Ritualism, that which is æsthetic preaching to the latter.

Now, it is certain that in her external worship the Church uses many actions not simply necessary, but which are purely symbolical, and that she gives mystic signification to a multitude of actions, movements, and objects used in her various rites. This too is a subject of accusation against her.

It is the nursery tale told to children that Catholics are slaves of a multitude of forms and ceremonies, and that they think to go to heaven by taking holy water, making genuflexions, and counting Paters and Aves on their beads.

And the old nursery tale is believed in after-life, so that it may be told boldly at any time and go unquestioned.

The notorious Lola Montes,—whether she was really a champion of “spiritual worship,” as understood in modern times, or more probably from hatred to priests, who had been the enemies of her scandals,—in a lecture she delivered in America, speaks of the Catholic priest-

hood as "a hierarchy of magicians, saving souls by machinery, opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven by a Sesame of incantations which it would have been the labour of a lifetime to make so much as intelligible to St Peter or St Paul." I feel shame in writing down such language; yet it would not have been used had it not been known to be acceptable to the audience to whom it was spoken; and the language of this virago is, in every respect, as decent as that used, almost every day, from many pulpits, and deliberately printed in books against Catholics.

Dr Vaughan seems not in vain to have invoked the shades of Wycliffe and of Knox. "Baptism," he says, "in the hands of the Ritualist, is a rite more fit to have come from the school of Simon Magus, a dealer in magic emblems, than from the school of Christ; and the scenic performances which the same authorities have connected with the Communion, remind us more of what we might have expected from an initiation into some heathen mystery, than the Supper for which the private room in Jerusalem was made ready some eighteen centuries ago."

When I read passages like these from the pen of Protestant ministers, I am reminded of a saying of the learned Anglican Johnson, in his "Treatise on the Unbloody Sacrifice," that "the candid Pliny gives us as *gentlemanlike* an account of the Eucharist, in his

letter to Trajan the Emperor, as some that go for Christian divines in these latter ages."

We have seen strong statements; let us examine whether they are based on equally strong proofs. I give the best I have been able to find in the various writers I have consulted. Of course, I confine myself to proofs or objections derived from Scripture.

Dr Vaughan quotes largely from the denunciations of our Blessed Lord against the Pharisees for their external observances of human traditions, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables, together with their neglect of the commandments of God; but I confess to my utter inability to see by what process of reasoning Pharisaic observances and Ritualistic exactitude are identified.*

When the Jews clamour for the death of Jesus Christ, and yet are too scrupulous to enter into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, I understand the force of the denunciation against such a mockery of religion. They, indeed, "strain out the gnat and swallow the camel." But when the Blessed Virgin Mary presses the "*Holy One*" to her bosom, and yet observes the law,—"*She shall touch no holy thing* until the days of her purification be fulfilled" (Lev. xii. 4),—is she too straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel?

Or, is there no difference between the love which

* The accusation as regards *tradition* will be discussed Part II.

observes even the least thing pertaining to the honour of God, and the hypocrisy which, despising God and violating His laws, tries to create for itself a reputation for sanctity by exactitude in external trifles?—no difference between Zachary and Elizabeth, “walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame” (Luke i. 6), and the Pharisees, “tithing mint and rue, and every herb, and passing over judgment and the charity of God” (Luke xi. 42) ?

Yet, even in the condemnation of the Pharisees, our Blessed Lord is careful to guard His words from abuse. He does not blame them for observing little things, but for making that observance a pretext for the neglect of weightier matters: “These things you ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Luke xi. 42).

Let us not be deceived by superficial resemblances. There are different ways of contributing to God’s external service. The men who sold in the Temple oxen, sheep, and doves pretended to be zealous for the sacrifices, though actuated only by avarice ; and our Divine Redeemer, in his real zeal for the honour of His Father’s house, drove them from it with a scourge of cords. There is a false zeal and a real zeal. So, too, there is a false Ritualism and a real Ritualism.

I am not going to defend the zeal of the money-changers, but that of Jesus Christ ; not the Ritualism of

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the Pharisees, but that of the Blessed Virgin and St Zachary.

I cannot but think that this attempt of Dr Vaughan to identify Ritualism and Pharisaism is eminently unfair. He says, that on no other ground can we understand why the Gospels should give us this everlasting Pharisee than that he is the type of Ritualists, and that Ritualism is a besetting sin of human nature. I willingly admit that the vices which our Blessed Lord denounced in the Pharisees are of all ages; I admit that there have been Catholics superstitiously resting in external ceremonies, substituting external strictness for solid virtue, and filled with disdainful pride.

But I do not think that the spirit which makes men say, "I thank God I am not as the rest of men," is exclusively found among Catholics. Certainly the conduct of English Protestants in Continental churches, and the scorn that is written on their faces for the multitudes who pray around them, are generally interpreted to mean, "I thank God that we English are not like the rest of the world, or as these wretched Papists who are beating their breasts yonder." The tone of English Protestant controversy is such that the celebrated De Maistre remarked, "One would think it was their belief that Christ died only for the English!" Were it necessary, I could illustrate the spirit of the Pharisee from more than one passage of Dr Vaughan's own volume.

But, to leave these recriminations, let us admit that the spirit of the Pharisee is detestable wherever it is found, either in a superstitious reliance on external practices, or in a supercilious disdain for those who adopt them. The true question at issue is this,—does the Publican, whose true piety is opposed in the Gospel to the boastful prayer of the Pharisee, show that scorn of ritual observances which some now consider the very essence of “worship in spirit and in truth.” On the contrary, our Blessed Redeemer has carefully noted no less than three different external ceremonies which accompanied his short but fervent prayer. He “stood afar off” from the altar or the other worshippers; he “would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven;” he “struck his breast.” He uses these three ritualistic and symbolic observances, for they are nothing less—respectful distance from what is holy, eyes cast down, striking of the breast*—as means to excite or to express the humble sentiments of his heart. The legitimate conclusion, from our Lord’s commendation of his conduct, as compared with that of the Pharisee, would certainly not be contrary to Ritualism, understood in the only sense in which the Catholic Church approves of it.

I have now considered the only argument of a positive nature which is alleged from the Gospels, as far as

* *Tussio pectoris*, a common practice everywhere among Catholics to this day, but, I believe, almost unused among Protestants.

I can discover, against the use of ceremonial. Certain passages from the Acts of the Apostles and from the Epistles are objected to, the force of which I will examine in the next chapter.

I find, however, that our opponents rely principally on a negative argument. "In no stage of our Lord's life," says Dr Vaughan, "in none of His appearances to His disciples after death, is there the slightest indication that any rite beyond His simple ordinance of Baptism, and His simple service at the Last Supper, was designed to have a place among His followers" "The Saviour appointed two great sacraments," says Dr Cumming, "Baptism and the Lord's Supper. If more had been requisite, He would have appointed more. But the very fact that He has appointed these two seems to teach by implication that more are unnecessary."

What implication is really involved in certain reticences of the New Testament, I will reserve for future consideration.

I reply now to the above negative argument by an absolute denial of what is alleged. I will proceed reverently to gather up some of the ritualistic actions practised or taught by our Lord and His Apostles, as related in the Gospels. And let me remark, that if many of them are minute, it is for that very reason I record them. The grand and impressive ceremonial I

have treated of already, and now pass over. I wish to see here whether our Lord sanctions minute and symbolic rites, as well as solemn and imposing ones.

In looking through the Gospel, I find that the following acts are recorded of the Word made flesh:—He *knelt* in prayer (Luke xxii. 41) ; He *fell flat* on the ground (Mark xiv. 35) ; He *raised His eyes* to heaven in giving thanks (Mark vi. 41) ; He lifted up and modulated His voice in obedience to harmony and rhythm (Mark xiv. 26) ; He employed in prayer formulas taken from the Psalms (Mark xv. 34 ; Luke xxiii. 46), and that too in the moment of intensest feeling, when, as His Apostle has remarked, “ *With a strong cry and tears* He offered up prayers and supplications ” (Heb. v. 7) ; He approved in others those demonstrations of repentance which could not belong to Himself, as of the Publican, who casts down his eyes and strikes his breast (Luke xviii. 13), and of “ *sackcloth and ashes,* ” as symbols of contrition (Luke x. 13).

Then, again, He receives the adoration and praises the faith of those who use ceremonies in their worship of Himself: of Peter, who “ *falls down at His knees* ” (Luke v. 8) ; of the lepers, who “ *fall on their face before Him* ” (Luke v. 12, xvii. 16) ; of the man born blind, who “ *falls down to adore Him* ” (John ix. 38) ; of the woman who touches the hem of His garment, “ *and falls down trembling before His feet* ” (Luke viii. 44, 47).

Nor does He consider St John Baptist superstitiously attached to external things, though he dresses in "a garment of camel's hair with a leathern girdle," just like a Catholic hermit, and expresses so great a reverence for the least thing that has come in contact with, or has relation to, his Divine Master, that he declares himself unworthy "to loose the latchet of His sandals" (Mark i. 7). And I may add, neither did the Apostle St Paul consider it superstitious "to lift up pure hands in prayer" (1 Tim. ii. 8), nor for one under the influence of strong religious feeling to "fall down on his face to adore God" (1 Cor. xiv. 25); nor did he consider it a matter of indifference whether men and women pray and prophesy in Christian assemblies with their heads covered or uncovered, and that for very mystical reasons (1 Cor. xi. 2-16).

Most of the instances above given are examples of the use of ceremonial in order to express interior feelings of piety already conceived. They prove that worship *in spirit* does not exclude worship with the body.

The examples that follow are proofs that ceremonial is equally well fitted to be a vehicle of *truth*. It expresses, sometimes more forcibly than words, the nature of what is done; and this is the basis and the justification of the rites used by the Catholic Church in the administration of the sacraments.

I remember but one example when our Lord works a miracle without word or sign—that of the change of water into wine at Cana (John ii. 7, 8). Either He uses a formula of words, as, “I will, be thou made clean,” or more often He gives emphasis to His word by action. Thus, when He says to the sea, “Peace, be still,” He rises at the same time in an attitude of majesty (Mark iv. 39); He stretches out His hand to Peter on the sea, takes the dead maiden by the hand, imposes His hands on the crippled woman (Luke xiii. 13), or touches the leper and the feverish woman (Matt. viii. 3, 15).

These ceremonies are indeed very simple; but there are others more elaborate and mystical. I may instance the cure of the deaf and dumb man. Our Divine Redeemer takes him aside, puts His fingers in his ears, spits, and touches his tongue, looks up to heaven, groaning and pronouncing the word *Ephpheta*—i.e., Be opened (Mark vii. 33, 34); and again the cure of two blind men is altogether mysterious. St Mark tells us how Jesus Christ led a man outside the town, how He spat upon his eyes, laid His hands on him, and caused him gradually to see (Mark viii. 23); and St John relates how, in another case, He spat on the ground, made clay with the spittle, spread the clay on the blind man’s eyes, and bade him go and wash in a certain pool, the very name of which (Siloe, or Sent), as the Evangelist remarks, is not without a mystery (John ix. 6, 7).

Now, considering that the Catholic Church, in administering baptism, in order to express the spiritual deafness and dumbness from which the grace of Jesus Christ delivers men, employs these very same ceremonies, we may know what to think of Dr Vaughan's assertion, that her Ritual of Baptism "is more fit to have come from the school of Simon Magus than from the school of Christ."

Dr Vaughan's colleague in invective, Lola Montez, also calls the Church's sacramental Ritual a "sesame of incantations." Had she remembered that, as the girl in the Arabian tale used the magic word *SESAME* to open the doors, so Jesus Christ, in the Gospel, used the word *EPHPHETA* to open the ears and loose the tongue of the deaf mute, she might more properly have worded her accusation in this way: "The Catholic priesthood opens and shuts the kingdom of heaven by an *EPHPHETA* of incantations, which it would be the labour of a lifetime to make so much as intelligible (not to St Peter and St Paul, but) to those spiritual deaf mutes, who are such, not merely by nature but by obstinacy, 'like the deaf asp that stoppeth her ears; which will not hear the voice of the charmers, nor of the wizard that charmeth wisely'" (Ps. lvii.)

But to return to the study of our Blessed Lord.

His manner of imparting spiritual graces and teaching lessons of virtue is no less ritualistic and symbolical

than His method of working bodily miracles. He imposes His hands on the little children with prayer (Matt. xix. 15); He breathes on His disciples when giving them the Holy Ghost (John xx. 22); and lifts up His hands to bless them when He ascends into heaven (Luke xxiv. 50). At one time He writes on the ground when the Pharisees wish to stone the adulteress (John viii. 6); at another He curses and withers up the fruitless fig-tree (Mark xi. 21); and after the remarkable ceremonial of washing His disciples' feet before His Passion (John xiii. 4-15), He says, "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you so you do also;" which words have surely the same force to lead us to imitate His way of teaching as to practise the virtues which He practised.

But his disciples were not left to their own instincts in drawing this conclusion. We find several examples of ceremonies prescribed for their use, whether they teach, work miracles, confer spiritual graces, or worship God. They are told by their Divine Master to shake the dust from their feet against the cities which rejected them (Mark vi. 11), and they interpret and obey this injunction literally, as we read in the Acts (xiii. 51). They are told to anoint the sick with oil, (Mark vi. 13), thereby prefiguring the unction afterwards promulgated by St James (James v. 14); to baptize with water, and to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. (Compare Matt. xxviii. 19 with Acts viii. 36, and Matt. xxvi. 26

with 1 Cor. x. 16.) They also make use of the imposition of hands (1 Tim. iv. 14, v. 22; Acts xiii. 3, xxviii. 8) to cure, or convey grace or authority; they use relics to work miracles (Acts xix. 12) and exorcisms; and symbolic actions to convey truths, as when Agabus binds his own hands and feet to signify the captivity of St Paul (Acts xxi. 11).

From all this it is abundantly evident that the religion which Jesus Christ taught by word and example is one replete with ceremonies;—to speak, to sing, to groan, to utter strong cries with the voice; to kneel or fall prostrate on the ground; to shed tears, to cast down the eyes to earth, to lift them to heaven; to strike the breast, to lift up the hands, to cover or uncover the head in prayer; to rise or sit; to wear unusual garments, to put on sackcloth, to sprinkle ashes on the head; to stretch out the hand, to impose hands; to write upon the ground, to breathe, to anoint with oil or with clay; to use spittle, to pour water; to shake the dust from the feet;—these, and such as these, are the rites of the New Testament. Are those prescribed to the Catholic priest in the Ritual of Paul V. either more numerous, more varied, or of a different character?

CHAPTER VI.

SYMBOLISM—(*continued*).

AFTER the long enumeration made in the preceding chapter of symbolic ceremonies used by our Blessed Lord and His Apostles, I scarcely know how to characterise the rule laid down by Dr Cumming :—“Let the worship,” he says, “be as pure, as perfect, as chaste and holy as can possibly be ; but let it not be desecrated by alien symbols.” Did he mean, simply, let there be no symbols out of harmony with Christian doctrine and morality ? This would be intelligible enough. But he does not mean this only. He asserts that symbols of every kind are repugnant to Christian worship.

“The Jewish religion,” he says, “was a religion of symbols ; but the Christian religion emerged from these, and the dead husks were buried for ever.” Of course, this proposition, in one sense, is a first principle among all Christians. No one can believe that Jesus Christ has come, and not understand that whatever prefigured Him has lost all meaning. No one can

believe that the Christian religion is Catholic, without admitting that whatever was intended in the Jewish worship to be local and limited, must have been abolished. No one can believe that the Christian religion is one of freedom and love, and not perceive that whatever was imposed as a bondage has been removed. But that the principle of symbolism was peculiarly and exclusively Jewish is neither declared in Scripture, nor in conformity with common-sense. Symbolism may either express the disposition, the thoughts and feelings of the soul,—and in this case it cannot be peculiar to Jews;—or it may refer to some divine reality external to the worshipper,—and in this case it may belong either to the past, the present, or the future. Now, if the Christian religion deals with the the past, the present, and the future, I am at a loss to understand why it should not refer to them by the language of symbols, as well as by that of speech. It would be equally reasonable to say: language was used by the prophets of old to foretell the coming of the Son of God, therefore, now that He has come, language can have no place in His religion.

But, perhaps, the Church has retained some of the Old Jewish rites? No doubt she has; but Protestants also are fond of telling us how much of their service of Common Prayer is derived from the worship of the Temple and the Synagogue.

We have certainly borrowed some few external rites, both from Mosaic and Pagan worship ; because they were the natural symbols of sentiments that were good, and of doctrines that were true. We might as reasonably disbelieve the immortality of the soul, because heathens taught it, as object to symbols merely because heathens used them.*

But Dr Cumming is determined to leave us no resting-place. "There ought," he says, "to be *nothing* symbolical in a Christian place of worship ;" and then he proceeds to lay down a rule, which it would puzzle the whole Institute of British Architects to carry out. "Make the building," he says, "as chaste, as beautiful, as perfect, as architectural taste can make it ; but let there be nothing typical or symbolical in it."

Now, I really cannot call to mind, or even imagine, a religion in which such a principle is recognised or obeyed. Quakerism, which may occur to some, is really no exception. In a religion which is almost entirely

* In a treatise on the reverence due to the altar, the Anglican Jeremy Taylor says :—"Will you give me leave to add the practice of the heathen? There's no hurt in it, for they, having not the law, yet by nature doing the things contained in the law, became a law unto themselves. I argue not from hence, because they do it, therefore we Christians must. But this : it is our duty by the law of Christendom and of all religions, and nature itself, as appears by the practice of heathen people ; and let us not be more rude in our addresses to God than they that know Him not, lest our familiar knowing Him intrench too much upon contempt. It is no shame, believe it, for us who are entitled heirs of heaven by promise, to imitate so pious practices even of barbarous and heathen people."

subjective—rather a philosophy than a religion—the symbolism will be scanty, because there is little to represent, but it will not be the less real or intense. Quakerism has its pet virtue of simplicity, and the bare walls of the meeting-house, and the straight collars, plain bonnets, and drab-coloured clothes of its occupants, which are intended to symbolise this virtue, are in reality an excessive Ritualism degenerated into Formalism. Is it not an instinctive Ritualism or Symbolism which Burns depicts in the Puritan home—

“ The Sire turns o'er wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride,—
His bonnet reverently laid aside ” ?

Would Dr Cumming find fault with this as a “ remnant of Popery ? ” I can scarcely believe it ; and yet the uncovering of the head is certainly symbolical. But not only is there no religion without its symbols—there is scarcely a rite or ceremony that is not symbolical. Dr Vaughan quarrels, I think a little unreasonably, with the Ritualists of the Church of England for innovating in the “ ceremonies in connexion with funerals.” “ The grave is to be no more a terror. Sable attire is to be cast off. Hues which are to inspire gladness must displace it.” Dr Vaughan does not like this. I question his good taste. Certainly if ever ceremonial is empty, it is that of an English Protestant funeral-procession. What those nodding plumes can symbolise, it would be hard

to say, unless it be the pomp of annihilation. Yet, in contending for the old unrelieved black, is not Dr Vaughan defending a symbolism—though a symbolism of gloomy ideas—as manifestly as the innovators whom he condemns?*

But the principle of symbolism, which all admit in practice, most even in theory, the Church applies consistently, systematically, and in detail; and in this she is not departing from the spirit or the teaching of the New Testament. I do not wish to retrace my footsteps, or it could be easy to point out how nearly every one of those ceremonies which I enumerated in the last chapter is symbolical; and a little reflection will be sufficient to convince my reader that those supernatural phenomena which run through the life of our Lord Jesus Christ are also symbolical, intended by exterior emblems to teach some truth, or, by exterior impressions, to arouse some analogous and appropriate feeling. And besides, if this matter is to be decided by the New Testament, the evidence of the importance there attached to symbolic ceremonies is really too clear to be questioned. In addition to all that has been already quoted, I will here transcribe a passage from St Paul's

* "Some people think black is the colour of heaven, and that the more they can make their faces look like midnight, the more evidence they have of grace. But God, who made the sun and the flowers, never sent me to proclaim to you such a lie as that," says Beecher among his "Life Thoughts."

First Epistle to the Corinthians, which is so minute and mystical on an *apparently* trifling point of Ritual, that if it were found in Durandus, instead of in a letter of the great Apostle, it might be mocked at as a piece of Popish folly. As the whole passage is rather obscure, I will give it in the excellent translation of Mr Conybeare rather than in either the Catholic or Protestant version.

“I praise you, brethren,” begins the Apostle, “that (as you say) you are always mindful of my teaching, and keep unchanged the rules which I delivered to you. But I would have you know that Christ is the Head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, as God is the Head of Christ. If a man should pray or prophesy in the congregation with a veil over his head, he would bring shame upon his head (by wearing the token of subjection). But if a woman prays or prophesies with her head unveiled, she brings shame upon her head as much as she that is shaven. I say, if she cast off her veil, let her shave her head at once; but if it is shameful to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her keep a veil upon her head. For a man ought not to veil his head, since he is the likeness of God, and the manifestation of God’s glory. For the woman’s part is to manifest her husband’s glory. For the man was not made from the woman, but the woman from the man. Nor was the man created for the sake of the woman,

but the woman for the sake of the man. Therefore the woman ought to wear a sign of subjection upon her head, because of the angels. . . . Judge of this matter by your own feeling. Is it seemly for a woman to offer prayers to God unveiled? Or does not even nature itself teach you that long hair is a disgrace to a man, but a glory to a woman? for her hair has been given to her for a veil. But if any one thinks to be contentious in defence of such a custom, let him know that it is disallowed by me, and by all the Churches of God" (1 Cor. xiv.)

It is not necessary for us to enter into questions as to the force of the precepts here given, or to inquire whether it was the Apostle who had abolished the custom of the tallith or veil which the Jews put over their heads when they entered their synagogue.

What concerns the matter of symbolism is this—that for these external practices the Apostle assigns deep doctrinal reasons. He will have the doctrine to be expressed by symbols.

And with regard to these and similar practices he had already given rules. Ritual had been part of his authoritative teaching. He does not treat the matter as one of simple indifference, in which each man may abound in his own sense. Though he appeals to reason when he says, "Judge by your own feeling," yet to any man who should say that he feels differently, he replies,

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"Neither I nor the Churches of God admit of your custom."

Mr Conybeare gives to the expression, "Let the woman be veiled, *because of the angels*," an interpretation which, if it is admitted, adds another reason for ritualistic discipline. "The angels," he says, "are sent as ministering servants to attend upon Christians, and are especially present when the Church assemble for public worship, and they would be offended by any violation of decency or order."

Was it fair in Dr Vaughan merely to say, "You may read epistle after epistle of St Paul, and not find one word touching upon anything of a Ritual nature"?—a thing which might be said of nearly every Papal Encyclical—and then, without even a reference to the above passage, to conclude that St Paul was a decided anti-ritualist?

But while I make use of passages like the above, I must guard against the misconception that might arise—that it is from such passages alone that the Church derived her doctrine and her practice. I will show in the next Part that this was not the case, and that it ought not to be the case.

The examples I have collected in this and the preceding chapter are but specimens of the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, not their whole teaching.

Just as the list of dangers encountered by himself,

which St Paul has drawn up in the eleventh chapter of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, is not a complete list—for after he had written this epistle he encountered many more—so any list of ceremonies we may gather from the New Testament is incomplete, and can serve only as evidence of a law. The memory of all other ceremonies used by the Apostles, besides those enumerated in Scripture, has not indeed been handed down by tradition in detail, though of some we have good evidence ; but the effect of their teaching and practice has survived. The principles of Ritualism were imbibed from apostolic teaching by the early Church, and, together with more precise information regarding the holy sacrifice and sacraments than is found in the written Word, these principles were transmitted to future generations, and have presided over the development of the Church's Ritual. But of this more later on.

This will be the proper place to consider whether a legitimate argument in favour of symbolic ceremonial may not be drawn from the figurative style used in Holy Scripture, both by the prophets when speaking of the times of the New Testament, by our Blessed Lord in His parables, and especially by St John in the Apocalypse. I find this distinctly denied by Dr Vaughan. "It is true," he says, "the language of the New Testament is often pictorial and symbolic ; but the picture and the symbol are in the teaching, that

they may *not* be in the worship. They have so done their work to the mind, as to have become superfluous to the senses." I must confess that the philosophy of this assertion is not very apparent; it not only contradicts the general instinct of mankind, but it is directly opposed to the testimony of Holy Scripture. Try by it such passages as the following:—"There came from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. He, when he was come to us, took Paul's girdle, and binding his own feet and hands, he said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, the Jews shall bind in this manner in Jerusalem," &c. (Acts xxi. 11).

On this occasion, neither did the prophet Agabus nor, I think I may safely add, the Holy Ghost, deem the symbolic action superfluous to add emphasis to the divine announcement. Or again, "He breathed on them, and He said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them," &c. (John xx. 22). Is not the breathing here symbolical, representing the procession of the Holy Ghost, His communication to the Apostles, and probably—as our Blessed Lord on this occasion gives to them the powers of a new life—alluding also to the saying in the Book of Genesis: "The Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a

living soul" (Gen. ii. 7)? Was the breathing then superfluous? I might adduce multitudes of similar instances.

It is customary for Protestants to reply, when such examples as these are alleged, that this was the Oriental mode of teaching! But besides that this is not appealing to the New Testament, but snatching at a reason for not conforming to the Bible, I will give an answer in words, which are not the less applicable to Ritualism because the Protestant author probably never dreamt of such application. Unconscious testimonies to principles are often the most valuable. The writer says, "It was not without a wise forecast of the world's necessities, and a knowledge of human nature, that God ordained that the Bible should be constructed in the *East*. Our unimpassioned, taciturn, and often cloudy temperament needs an infusion of the piety which grew up in those lands of the sun. Such an infusion of the Oriental life-blood into the stock of our Christian experience would bring us into closer sympathy with the holy and refined types of Scripture, which are redolent with beauty and sensibility."

The amiable authoress of "The Calm Hour," from whom I have borrowed this quotation, adds most truly, and even still more to my purpose: "The most grand and beautiful objects in creation have their parallel in the vast range of revelation. Did we examine more

minutely the various characters of the symbols used in Scripture, they would help to impress the realities more deeply on our memories. Our knowledge of God is in its infancy, and we are infants. Let us take a lesson from the way in which we train *our* infants. We set before them *pictures* of history, of persons, and events, which we wish them to retain on their memory."

Perhaps the illustration may offend the pride of some, who have not been wont to meditate on the divine sentence, "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." And they might quote against me the words of St Paul, who reproached the Hebrews: "You are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat; for every one that is a partaker of milk is unskilful in the word of justice, for he is a little child. But strong meat is for the perfect" (Heb. v. 13). But without stopping here to reconcile the words of the servant with those of the Master, and without doing more than suggest that there is no clearer proof of spiritual infancy in the bad sense, than the thought that we are already among the perfect, it may soothe the minds of such objectors to know, that Milton considered symbolic teaching as not simply a condescension to human weakness, but as founded in the very nature of things. It is thus he makes the Archangel Gabriel address our first father :—

“ And what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best : though what if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought ? ” *

Symbolism, then, is a law of human nature fully recognised in every part of the Scriptures ; and since the example of our Blessed Lord, no less clearly than common-sense, tells us that symbolism may be presented to the senses as well as to the imagination, it need not seem a very strained or far-fetched argument which a Catholic might construct on these principles in favour of the Ritualism of his Church. I read, for instance, in the prophet Isaias, the promise made to the Christian Church :—“ The glory of Libanus shall come to thee, the fir-tree and the box-tree and the pine-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will glorify the place of my feet ” (Isa. lx. 13). I need not to be told that God’s sanctuary is here the congregation of the faithful, and that the precious woods are but the symbols of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost. All this I know full well. But I reflect that, if a magnificent temple, seen by the prophet in imagination, can typify the people among whom God dwells, the objective reality from which the image was drawn will be no less perfect a type.

* “Paradise Lost,” Book v. line 570 *sqq.*

If gold and silver and precious stones and wood are fit emblems when spoken of, they are no less fit when seen. They could not be symbolical in language if they were not symbolical in their own nature and in reality. I am at a loss to understand why it should be right for a spiritual person to recall material objects to the memory, and unlawful to present them to the senses, when they are capable of it.

I read the vision of St John in the Apocalypse:—
 “Another angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel” (Apoc. viii. 3, 4).
 Now, is it intelligible that a golden censer should be lawfully spoken of and conceived in imagination, while to manufacture and use it would be a crime, or at least an absurdity?—that a Protestant, who sees and smells the fragrant cloud of incense only in fancy, should be a spiritual worshipper, and the Catholic, who perceives them with the organs of sense, should be looked down on as grovelling and carnal?

Yet Dr Vaughan ridicules the idea that the Apocalypse can furnish an argument in favour of Ritual. “Every man of intelligence must feel,” he says, “that

an attempt to bring the symbolism of the Apocalypse into the service of the Christian Church must be a hazardous experiment."

What is the meaning of sayings like this? Was St Augustine not a man of intelligence? or St Chrysostom? or St Thomas? or Bossuet? or Dante? Have not millions of men of intelligence made this experiment and seen no hazard in it? Why not give a reason without claiming a monopoly of intelligence? I fear the reason that Dr Vaughan gives does not quite bear out this claim. "If this course is taken at all," he asks, "where is it to stop? If, because an angel is said to cause the smoke of incense to ascend before the Almighty in heaven, Christian priests should cause it to ascend from the Church on earth, why should not the priest imitate the next thing said to be done by the angel, viz., fill the censer with fire, and cast it forth to summon up 'voices and thunderings, and lightnings and earthquakes'? Many other strange things the angels are said to do in the services of that world; are they all precedents to be followed by Christ's ministers in this world? If not, who is to separate between the symbolism to be taken, and the symbolism to be left?"—Who is to separate? I might answer: The Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Ghost. But as Dr Vaughan would scoff at this answer, I reply: Good sense and good taste will separate.

How does an artist discriminate between the poetical descriptions or divine visions he will try to represent on canvas, and those which he may not attempt? By the rules of art, doubtless. He knows that the capabilities of painting are not those of language; that though his art has certain great advantages,—

“ Possessing more than vocal power,
Persuasive more than poet’s tongue,”

as Campbell sings; yet it has not the range which belongs to language. The latter admits a more subtle play of fancy, glancing lightly from earth to heaven. It admits of change and movement, which cannot be expressed on canvas. The artist, therefore, will not attempt to reproduce everything which he admires in poetry. Yet it would be a strange thing to assert that, because he cannot copy everything, he must venture on nothing.

A similar answer may be given to Dr Vaughan’s questions concerning the Apocalypse. Where must the Ritualist stop? Who is to separate between the symbolism to be taken and the symbolism to be left? Who? why, the traditions and rules of the art of Ritual, based on common-sense, good taste, and the very nature of things.

The symbolism of art or of action has advantages over the symbolism of language in some respects.

Yet it has a much narrower field. A Catholic youth would know that many of the allegories of the Apocalypse are unfit subjects for Ritual, and that many images taken from the forest and the field, from the strife of the elements, or the occupations of men, cannot be transferred to the sanctuary of a church. Yet a little candour would suffice to make a Protestant admit that it is not absurd or unreasonable to maintain that, when the allegory has been derived, not from nature, but from the sanctuary, the representation of the allegory may be a very fit subject for Ritual. Dr Vaughan speaks as if Catholic worship was an attempt to represent on earth what St John had seen in heaven; whereas St John transfers to his description of heaven what he had first seen on earth. The golden censers, the clouds of incense, the lamps and candlesticks, the altar, the thrones and crowns, the white robes, the precious stones, the harps and singing, the prostrations and adorations, are not realities of heaven which we try to copy on earth; they are realities, symbolic realities, belonging to earthly worship, which St John considered fit emblems of heavenly mysteries in themselves ineffable.

It matters not in the least whether, in the time of St John, any of these things were used in Christian worship, or whether he and those for whom he wrote had only seen them in the Temple of Jerusalem. If St John sees in them the most adequate emblems of Christian mys-

teries, of heavenly and eternal truths, then they belong more truly to the Church than to the Temple, and they are as fitly represented to Christian eyes as they are read of to Christian ears.

Indeed, the symbolism of the Bible is not intended merely to illustrate truth by means of images taken from what we have seen in past time, or what we have read of ; it is intended also, in very many cases, that the truth and the image, having been once associated in our minds, the sight of the image may serve to recall the truth. This is, perhaps, one reason why our Blessed Lord chose so many of His types from what is most familiar in human life. This view of our Lord's teaching has been beautifully developed by the American Beecher.

"What wonderful provision," he says, "God has made for us, spreading out the Bible into types of nature !

"What if every part of your house should begin to repeat the truths which have been committed to its symbolism ? The lowest stone would say, in silence of night, 'Other foundation can no man lay.' The corner-stone would catch the word, 'Christ is the corner-stone.' The door would add, 'I am the door.' The taper burning by your bedside would stream up a moment to tell you, 'Christ is the light of the world.' If you gaze upon your children, they reflect from their sweetly-sleeping faces the words of Christ, 'Except ye become like little

children.' If, waking, you look towards your parents' couch, from that sacred place God calls Himself your father and your mother. Disturbed by the crying of your children, who are affrighted in a dream, you rise to soothe them, and hear God saying, 'So will I wipe away all tears from your eyes in heaven.' Returning to your bed, you look from the window. Every star hails you, but, chiefest, 'the bright and morning Star.' By and by flaming from the east, the flood of morning bathes your dwelling, and calls you forth to the cares of the day, and then you remember that God is the Sun, and that heaven is bright with His presence. Drawn by hunger, you approach the table. The loaf whispers, as you break it, 'Broken for you,' and the wheat of the loaf sighs, 'Bruised and ground for you.' The water that quenches your thirst says, 'I am the water of life.' If you wash your hands, you cannot but remember the teachings of spiritual purity. If you wash your feet, that hath been done sacredly by Christ, as a memorial. The very roof of your dwelling hath its utterance, and bids you look for the day when God's house shall receive its top-stone."

Well, the Church has entered into the spirit of this Providence of God. She does not think herself bound slavishly to embody in her worship all the emblems of Holy Writ. Yet she has loved to do so when no reason of religion or of taste opposed; and so a thousand

objects casually seen bring back to the memory and heart of the Catholic familiar with her rites the divine lessons of prophets and apostles, and especially of the Great Master, by whom those objects were employed as types. In the course of ages many a figure besides those used by inspired writers has been added by holy men to the Church's Ritual. Fools, who rush in where angels fear to tread, may deride those holy rites, and blaspheme what most they are ignorant of; but those whose minds and hearts have been attuned to heavenly things are lost in admiration. "How beautiful is everything!" exclaims one well qualified to speak, "how serene! as if the harmonious wisdom of the Church had actually moulded the external form of matter to its own perfection. Catholicism has produced all the lovely forms which order can assume within the narrow limits of space and time."*

Yes, the Church's rule is, let everything be symbolical, so that the Christian may drink in lessons by every sense. Nor is it wise to object that but few know or think of what is contained in all these symbols. The same may be said of all the symbolism of nature; yet God has made provision for the few prudent, as well as for the thoughtless multitude. But I will consider the objections in another chapter.

* Digby.

CHAPTER VII.

MULTITUDE AND OBSCURITY.

THE preface to the Anglican Prayer-Book says, that the Reformers put away some of the old Catholic rites, "because the great excess and multitude of them hath so increased in these latter days that the burden of them was intolerable; that many of them were so dark, that they did more confound and darken than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us. And besides this, Christ's Gospel is not a ceremonial law (as much of Moses' law was), but it is a religion to serve God, not in bondage of the figure or shadow, but in the freedom of the spirit." Two charges, then, are made against the ceremonies of Catholic Christendom: that they are too numerous and too obscure:—a bondage and a puzzle. It is, of course, impossible to answer charges like these completely, without examining these various ceremonies in detail, which is foreign to my scope. It will be enough for me to refer to some of the principles of the New Testament. This, I think, will be a sufficient vindication.

1. And, first, as to their multiplicity :—

One can easily understand that a thing may be good in moderation and burdensome by excess. *Ne quid nimis* is a very old proverb. Does this proverb contain the condemnation of the practice of the Catholic Church regarding Ritual?

It is the common Protestant tradition that it does. When the poet Crabbe, who is generally careful in the selection of his epithets, wants one distinctive of a Catholic, he speaks of—

“ The burthen’d Papist,
Him who new robes for every service takes.”

He speaks after the usage of his predecessors; for the Established Church, as Dr Newman says, “is the keeper in ordinary of those national types and blocks, from which Popery is ever to be printed off,” and its main function consists “in cataloguing and classing the texts which are to batter us, and the objections that are to explode among us, and the insinuations and slanders that are to mow us down.” The “text” that has been selected from the Protestant arsenal to do duty on this occasion, is taken from the speech of St Peter before the council of Jerusalem. It was, indeed, a happy thought, whoever may claim the merit of originating it, to make St Peter, whom Catholics look upon as their first Pope, and regard with special honour, protest by anticipation against the practice of his successors. But

let us examine a little this formidable text. "Why tempt you God," says St Peter, to the Judaisers, "to put a yoke upon the neck of His disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts xv. 10).

It is asserted, by those who cast these words in our teeth, that the numerous ceremonies of the Catholic Church are identical in principle and in effect with the ceremonial law of the Jews, and that they proved such an intolerable burden, that "our fathers" of the Reformation threw it off, and that the free necks of Protestants now refuse to submit again to the yoke. It was not, however, calm criticism that suggested this application of St Peter's words.

The Apostle certainly was not speaking of the splendour of the ancient Temple, nor of the ceremonies used by Jewish priests in the immediate worship of God. Regarding them there was no controversy. The question agitated before the council was one of discipline rather than of worship. The yoke that was attempted to be laid on the necks of the disciples was the obligation of circumcision, and the observance of all the multiplied and inconvenient prescriptions and restrictions of the Mosaic law. It was not their mere difficulty that made these so heavy a yoke; but it was that their fulfilment was attended by no equivalent spiritual gain. Those observances did not help in themselves to piety or sanctity; those restrictions were not useful safe-

guards against sin. The Judaisers would not understand that this yoke, having been imposed to distinguish and separate those whom God had entrusted with His revelation from the surrounding idolatrous nations, could only serve as an impediment, now that the Church was to be Catholic and the heathen invited to the faith. Under similar circumstances Catholics would exclaim as loudly as Protestants against observances or restrictions which would needlessly and fruitlessly hamper their civil and social intercourse, or impede their missionary success.

This is not the place to discuss the disciplinary laws of the Catholic Church, or it would be easy to show that they have nothing in common with the abolished prescriptions of Judaism. We are concerned only with ceremonial in the strict sense. And I assert, that the ceremonial of Jewish worship was neither a yoke to the fathers of whom St Peter spoke, nor to St Peter himself; and that the ceremonial of Catholic worship, far from being a yoke, was the solace and delight of our Catholic fathers, as it is of ourselves.

St Peter neither did nor could speak of the worship of the Temple, with its splendour or its symbolic rites, as a yoke which his fathers could not bear. He would have contradicted every fact of Jewish history, and almost every page of Scripture.

If Jewish worship had been a yoke, could the prophet

Isaias have promised : " You shall have a song, as in the night of the sanctified solemnity, and joy of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe, to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel " (Isa. xxx. 29) ? or could David have exclaimed : " How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ; my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord " (Ps. lxxxiii.) ?

Who that reads of the joy with which David celebrated, in triumphal procession and with all the pomp of Ritualism, the bringing of the Ark to Zion, will maintain that St Peter called such ceremonies a yoke which his fathers could not bear ? Or who that reads of the joy of St Peter himself, when he cried out upon the Mount of Transfiguration, " Rabbi, it is good for us to be here," will believe for a moment that St Peter looked upon splendour as a hindrance and a burden to devotion ?

Or again, is it not evident beyond all contradiction, that when our Divine Redeemer, with so much emphasis, washed His disciples' feet, or when, with minute and mystic ceremonies, He opened the ears and loosed the tongue of the deaf-mute, this ceremonial neither burdened His own Divine Heart, nor was a clog to the devotion of His disciples ?

Yet, if we look in Scripture for a parallel to the rites of the Catholic Church, we shall find it in such portions

of the life of our Blessed Lord, or in such circumstances of the Old Testament, as I have just referred to; not in the disciplinary and ceremonial laws which St Peter condemned.

We do indeed read of one to whom Ritualism was a yoke. The haughty Michol derided the religious pomp of her husband. In a spirit identical with that of some of our modern revilers, she looked on David's dancing before the Ark as "antics," and called him boldly a "buffoon" (2 Kings vi.) But God was so far from being pleased with her thoughts and language, that it is written of her: "Therefore Michol, the daughter of Saul, had no child to the day of her death." Those who have inherited Michol's spirit, seem also to have inherited her punishment. They have neither had the gift of fruitfulness to convert the heathen, nor power to attract the multitudes of their own land.*

It is evident, then, that it is not enough to prove that Ritualism is burdensome to certain minds; the inquiry must be, whether it is an impediment to the spirit of prayer, to the Spirit of God? or whether it is only obnoxious to pride and sloth, and all that is called in Scripture "flesh and blood"? Modern writers are accustomed to despise the ancients for their

* "Bonus ludus quo Michol irascitur et Deus delectatur" (St Bernard, Ep. 87.)

a priori reasonings. It is the boast of modern science that it progresses by induction. Yet this method of reasoning is seldom applied by Protestants to their controversies against the Catholic Church. There is the experience now of many centuries and of many countries, which might be consulted in order to test the truth of theories. Let men of good will search out this question for themselves from the annals of Catholic nations. They will find those annals to prove that great exactness in the detail of God's worship has no tendency to burden the soul or impede its flight to God ; on the contrary, that the holy priests, whose piety at Mass has melted the soul into tears of tenderness or raised it into ecstatic raptures, have been remarkable for their minute observance of the very slightest rubrics ; and that only those ministers of God who are unworthy of the name,—those whose faith has grown dull, whose lives are sensual and worldly,—those only find the ceremonial of the Church an intolerable yoke which they are anxious to throw off.

2. The second objection brought by the Anglican Reformers was that much of the symbolism of the Catholic Church is so obscure that it requires quite a technical education to find out its meaning.

Let me take note of this objection before I reply to it ; for it contains a peremptory refutation of another objection more common though less specious.

It is commonly asserted that the worship of the Catholic Church is theatrical. If by this it was merely meant that it has a scenic or representative character, I would willingly admit the word. But when it is meant that the Church uses a display intended to attract and captivate the idle and curious gaze, the word is singularly inappropriate. The truth is, that the idle and curious gazers are always offended by her ceremonies, because they cannot comprehend them, and they have little charm for the mere eyes and ears. So many ceremonies have a spiritual and hidden meaning, so many prayers contain deep and mystic allusions, which can only be perceived and understood by those who are instructed and attentive. The ceremonies of Holy Week, for example, possess little attraction to the curious Protestant or the worldly Catholic ; but they are full of inexhaustible charm to the devout worshipper, who has taken pains to ascertain their meaning and meditate attentively on the events they recall and the allusions they contain.

Yet, if some of the Church's rites are obscure, it is not after the fashion of Masonic initiations, the obscurity of which is their only value ; nor are they like Egyptian hieroglyphics, whose secret was known only to the sacerdotal race ; nor are they rites like those, the pattern of which was shown to Moses on the Mount, intended to conceal rather than explain truths, for the utterance

of which the time was not yet come. They are like the parables of Jesus Christ, by the very texture of the veil provoking a holy curiosity to look beneath it; they are the mirror in which we see now enigmatically what as yet we cannot gaze on face to face.

It is quite true that the stranger to our faith, who comes amongst us to pry, perchance to mock, will go away filled with scorn, for our ceremonies are a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians, while they are a light by night to the Israelites. But it is in great measure to the emblematic and profound nature of the Church's rites that is due the singular fact that, while to witness them but once is tedious to the incredulous or the worldly, their constant recurrence never wearies the devout. Each year, as the same festivals revolve, those who have eyes to see and ears to hear discover new depths, new beauties, new harmonies, new lights, new joys and consolations. Is it not right it should be so? Is there to be no reward for the diligence, the attention, and the perseverance of the devout? Or are we to be blamed because some rites are calculated to impress the senses, and so to enlighten the minds of the ignorant and arouse the careless from their torpor, and then blamed a second time because there are rites which suit only the learned and the spiritual? Must not the Church care for all her children? Taught by the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures, she has composed her Ritual on

the same plan. "In Holy Scripture," says St Augustine, "there are many things plain, by which God feeds the soul even of the simple. There are other things obscure. The very obscurity of these provokes curiosity and prevents satiety: there is a pleasant labour in seeking the hidden truth, and when it is discovered it is enjoyed in proportion to the labour of its acquisition. And thus a novelty is given even to what was old, by the newness of the form that envelops it. Quid est hoc, rogamus vos, fratres, unde dulciora quo obscuriora? Conficit nobis potionem ad amorem suum quibusdam miris modis." *

And on what plan but this was God's own Ritual composed? Look again to Calvary. The darkness, the earthquake, the loud voice, were signs which even the simplest could understand; and they struck their breasts with compunction for the crime, and they felt there was a mystery, though they knew not well its nature.

But there were other words and signs the people could not read. Why was the veil of the Temple rent? Why were the graves opened? Why was no bone broken? Why did blood and water flow from the pierced side? What was the meaning of the agonising cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"? Why were those words quoted from a psalm? What

* St August., Enar. in Ps. 138.

relation had that psalm to Him who used it? Why did He speak these words in the Hebrew tongue? These are questions which the people could not have answered. Perhaps Mary alone, of all the witnesses, knew their full meaning. But they are mysteries which invite us to reflection; and he who seeks gains more profit from his search than if all things had been laid bare to him at first. But, alas! as a great writer has most truly said, "ours is an age which has endeavoured to make everything perspicuous but what relates to heaven, and which toils unceasingly to make provision for the gratification of every thirst but that of justice."

PART II.



THE ORIGIN OF CATHOLIC RITUAL

JUSTIFIED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRADITION AND RITUAL.

IN the first Part of this Essay we have been considering what support the New Testament gives to some of the principal characteristics of Catholic Worship. We have now to examine how far the Rites themselves, as well as their form, are of Christian origin.

Now, the Catholic Church does not profess to have derived her Ritual from the New Testament. She believes it to be founded in a great measure on events of which there is more or less record in the New Testament, and therefore to be in perfect harmony with those records. But she believes it, in its essential parts, to be more ancient than the New Testament; and she has never maintained that the New Testament gives a full and detailed account of all that is of divine or apostolic origin in her Ritual.

In a word, Catholics believe that Ritual is founded on tradition, and is itself no inconsiderable part of what is

called apostolic tradition. Of this, then, I have now to speak.

It may be said that I have promised to confine myself to Scripture. I have not forgotten, nor do I intend to violate my promise ; for I am not going to consider the testimony of tradition to Ritual, but the testimony of Scripture to the tradition of Ritual. Every argument will still be drawn from the New Testament alone.

In the present chapter we are to consider what is meant by this word Tradition, how tradition and Ritual are related in the Catholic theory, and how the controversy regarding tradition and Ritual ought to be treated.

1. First, then, what is Tradition ?

I find that various misconceptions exist respecting the meaning of this word, even among educated men,—misconceptions which would seem wilful were it not for the notorious confusion of ideas engendered by the Babel of controversies amidst which we live.

Thus, to take a modern instance, the author of a treatise on the Bible, called "*Liber Liborum*," says that those who appeal to tradition forget "that everything to which man attaches importance he desires to have in writing ; that all we know of history comes down to us in books ; that books live when tradition dies ; and that letters remain unchanged when institutions have altogether lost their original character."* He is mis-

* "*Liber Librorum : Its Structure, Limitations, and Purpose*," p. 84.

taken. We do not forget such elementary truths. But he forgets that tradition is not necessarily unwritten.

We do indeed maintain that oral teaching has many advantages over teaching by writing ; but, again, books are of the greatest help to oral teaching, and may sometimes be necessary.

When St John wrote to Gaius,—“ I had many things to write unto thee, but I would not by ink and pen write to thee, but I hope speedily to see thee, and we will speak mouth to mouth ” (3d Epistle of St John, v. 13, 14),—he recognised the superior facility of oral communication ; yet when he wrote his Gospel, he by the very fact recognised the great utility of written records.

But the question of Scripture and tradition is not one merely of the respective advantages of written or oral teaching, for tradition is not necessarily unwritten. “ Unwritten Tradition ” is a technical phrase, which does not mean tradition committed to memory, and which it is unlawful to put on paper ; it means tradition not written down *in the canonical books of Scripture* by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost,—tradition entrusted by the Holy Ghost to the Church, to be transmitted in other ways, of which writing is of course one of the principal.

The distinction is, in many respects, precisely the same as that between the unwritten or common law, and the written or statute law, in British jurisprudence.

What should we think of an educated Englishman who should write and publish an attack on the common law without having ever read in Blackstone, or any equally accessible manual, that some of our laws are called unwritten, not because they are merely oral, or communicated from former ages to the present by word of mouth, but because their original institution and authority are not set down in writing as Acts of Parliament are?*

Indeed, with more plausibility, though not with justice, the same accusation has been brought against unwritten traditions that is often made against the common law of England, that there is far too much writing. "What is called with us unwritten or customary law," says Dr Phillimore, "is in truth to be collected from a vast and increasing number of written volumes. Fortescue said that in his time they required the lucubrations of twenty years. Whether the life of an antediluvian patriarch would now suffice to attain a perfect knowledge of it may, perhaps, be a question."† So, too, it has been said that it would require more than a lifetime to read through the writings of the Fathers and other sources of Catholic tradition; and it has been objected that whatever difficulties there may be in gathering one's religion from the Bible, there are tenfold more in gathering it from

* Blackstone, Introduction, sect. 3.

† "Principles and Maxims of Jurisprudence," p. 327.

such multitudinous sources as those of primitive antiquity.

But here again the objection is founded on a total misconception of what is meant by tradition. The apostolic traditions have been handed down in a living and continuous society, and in ten thousand forms, from the day of their origin until now ; and a member of that living society enters into possession of its traditions by means of his education in, and intercourse with the society itself. I need not know my genealogy in order to derive my blood from my ancestors, because it has been transmitted to me by a living succession. I need no more read St Cyprian or St Augustine in order to know the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, or the necessity of Baptism, than I need read Coke or Blackstone to know my right of being tried by my peers, or my duties as a juror. These are simple truths or facts, constituting the very life-blood of the society in which I live. And just as the multitude of channels by which such facts are handed down in civil society, instead of making the knowledge of them more difficult, makes it infinitely more easy, and makes ignorance of them almost impossible : so, too, in the Catholic Church, the multitude of the writings of the Fathers, the multitude of monuments of every age remaining to attest the Apostolic faith, the multitude of the institutions, rites, and usages of the Catholic Church does not make the

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knowledge of the faith difficult of access, but makes ignorance of it utterly inexcusable. The proof of this is in the plain and undeniable fact that the simplest and most unlettered Catholic, if he is in any kind of living communion with his Church, does know perfectly well what she teaches on all the elementary truths and duties which it is necessary for him to know ; while the most learned Protestants do not know, or do not agree in declaring, what the Holy Scriptures teach even on the most important and elementary subjects.

One of the most recent advocates of the Protestant treatment of the Bible is constrained to admit that, whatever little unanimity there is among the different sects of Christians is due to tradition. "The various churches of Christendom are, as a fact, united in opinion only so far as they have followed in common the theological systems of Augustine or of Anselm. The agreement, therefore, so far as it goes, is hereditary and traditional only, and not the result of that humble but independent investigation which is alone of value."* This confession deserves to be inserted in the next edition of Bossuet's "Variations." It betrays, however, a sad progress. In the first years of the Reformation, Calvin wrote to Melancthon : "It is of great importance that no suspicion should reach posterity of the divisions amongst us ; for it is beyond imagination ridiculous,

* "*Liber Librorum*," p. 121.

that after having broken off from the rest of the world, we should agree so little amongst ourselves even in the very outset of our reformation.”*

Here was the first blush of shame at the beginning of a bad career ; but the theological conscience has now grown hardened, and has learnt to glory in its shame. Since disunion is the inevitable result of that “ independent investigation which is alone of value,” according to the modern theory, disunion shall no longer be denied or concealed, it shall be justified and extolled. Are these the disciples of Him who prayed before His death for His Apostles and “ for them also who through their word should believe in Him : that they may all be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee ; that they may also be one in Us ; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me ? ” (John xvii. 21.) If the experience of eighteen centuries goes for anything, it proves that unity can only be the result of traditional and authoritative teaching ; and that the principle of “ independent investigation ” of such a Book as the Bible can lead only to endless divisions.

To resume, then, what has been said. By tradition we mean either the handing down of truths and facts, or the truths and facts themselves which are handed down. And in this latter sense, by unwritten tradi-

* Calvin, Ep. ad Mel., quoted by Bossuet, “ *Histoire des Variations*,” liv. ii.

tions, Catholics mean all those truths and facts, whether identical with what is recorded in Scripture or not, which are handed down from one generation to another by any means besides the inspired Scriptures themselves. By Apostolic traditions we mean such as are derived from the teaching and actions of the Apostles, and are not of later and merely ecclesiastical origin.

Among Apostolic traditions, and among the channels of Apostolic traditions, Ritual holds a very prominent place.

This is the point which we will now proceed to consider.

It will be sufficient, in the present chapter, to state clearly the question at issue between Catholics and Protestants, and the mode of settling it. The proof of the Catholic position will be reserved for the next chapter.

2. Statement of the question regarding tradition.

There are, doubtless, many Protestants who write *as if*, before the Apostles separated on their respective missions, they had written out the New Testament in its present form, multiplied copies of it, as is done at the present day, and distributed everywhere these copies to their disciples.

Of course no one ever maintained such a palpable absurdity; yet many act and speak as if this had been the case.

The controversies of the day, however, with Rationalists, have forced the attention of the Protestant world to the formation of the canon of the New Testament in a way that Catholic theologians have in vain tried to effect. The truths on this subject, which till lately seemed known only to the learned, have at length become popular.

A recent writer on the Protestant side, who is so far from having either "High Church" or Catholic tendencies, that while he speaks of Anglicans with scorn, he can scarcely bring himself to call the Catholic Church by any other name than "the apostasy," or "the mystery of iniquity," says on this subject: "It was, without doubt, *long* before the written word occupied any position at all resembling that which it now holds. Nor is this surprising. For as the gospel had been at first proclaimed orally, a vivid tradition of this teaching would naturally take the place of any book or books in which it might be embodied. Indeed, for the first hundred and fifty years, the Apostolic writings, although in separate circulation, do not seem to have been regarded in any sense as forming one authoritative book. The first catalogue of the books of Holy Scripture, drawn up by any public body in the Christian Church, which has come down to us, is that of the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 365). The application of the term Bible to the *collective volume* of the sacred

writings cannot be traced above the fourth century."*

But lest these facts should seem to favour the Catholic view of tradition, the same writer adds: "No one disputes that the Church (that is, a company of living believers in Christ) was called into existence by the Lord and his Apostles *before* the New Testament was written; but it owes this existence to the word which the Scriptures *contain*." And then he quotes the following passage from Bernard's "Bampton Lectures": "The word was antecedent to the existence of the Church, as the cause is to the effect. The *writing* of that Word, and its reception when written, were subsequent to the formation of the Church, but the writing only *made permanent* for future time the Word by which the Church had been created; and the reception of the writings only *recognised* them as the same Word in its form of permanence. Thus, while the Church is *chronologically before* the Bible, the Bible is *potentially before* the Church; since the *written* Word, which is the ground of faith to later generations, is one in origin, authority, and substance with the *oral* Word, which was the ground of faith to the first generation of Christians."

In this passage two principles are assumed without proof, which no Catholic will grant. First, that Scrip-

* "Liber Librorum," p. 79.

ture and tradition are co-extensive ; and, secondly, that after the reception of Scripture a written rule of faith was substituted for an oral one. I shall deal with the former of these assumptions in another chapter ; the latter is the one that occupies us now. They are, indeed, entirely distinct, though in the minds of most Protestants they are so closely associated as to seem almost identical. Indeed it is very commonly said that Catholics have had recourse to the plea of tradition as the origin of some of their doctrines and practices, because they could find for them no justification in Scripture ; and that what are called Apostolic traditions are really human corruptions and additions to Apostolic teaching.

To this I reply, that even if there were explicit, and detailed, and undisputed authority in Scripture for every doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church, which is a thing we do not assert ; yet, even if there were such, we should still make use of tradition, still defend it as a divine and necessary appointment, still consider it as an authentic, authoritative, and divine witness to God's revelation. The Scriptures alone, however full or explicit they might be supposed to be, would require something more than themselves, not by way of proof or explanation, but of result or fulfilment. If I found all the decrees of all œcumenical councils, in so many words, in the pages of the New

Testament, I should still require something more. I should look not in Scripture, but outside Scripture, for the things of which it spoke—for the rites and the sacraments, and the priesthood and the hierarchy, just as I have to look for these things now, not in the shelves of my library, but in the living Catholic Church.

But the continued existence of such things as I have mentioned constitutes a part of what we call tradition. Things have a voice as well as books. Institutions not only exist but speak. They are witnesses. "The heavens show forth the glory of God," says the Psalmist, "and the firmament declareth the work of His hands. . . Their *sound* is gone forth into all the earth, and their *words* into the ends of the world" (Ps. xviii. 1-4). God's creatures, then, are God's witnesses.

But God's supernatural works—the Christian Church with its constitution and its ritual—have also a sound which is gone forth into all the earth. As the continued existence of the universe is God's tradition of the Creation, so is the continued existence of the Church the tradition of the Redemption.

Tradition, then, is not confined to the memories and mouths of men, any more than to the pages of books. It is also the voice of Ritual. Let me take as an illustration the one sacrament of Baptism. Its form of words teaches of the blessed Trinity, Father, Son,

and Holy Ghost. The pouring of the water teaches of the stain of sin, original or actual, and indirectly of the first father of the human race, from whom original sin is derived, and, consequently, of the unity of the human race. It teaches also of the second Adam, the Redeemer, by whose authority this rite is administered ; it teaches of grace and justification, and of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which, and according to which, the death to sin and resurrection to grace are conferred. It teaches also of a visible Church, to which it is a visible entrance. Of all these things it speaks by its very nature. How much more clearly when the rites and ceremonies of ecclesiastical institution are added to it, the exorcisms and unctions, the profession of faith and the promises, the white robe, and the lighted candle, and the rest. To quote the words of the Archbishop of Westminster : * “The sacrament of Baptism incorporates, so to say, the doctrines of original sin and of regeneration ; the sacrament of Penance, the absolution of sin after Baptism, the cleansing of the precious blood, the power of contrition, the law of expiation ; the sacrament of Confirmation, the interior grace, and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost ; the sacrament of Order, the divine authority, unity, and power of the hierarchy of the Church ; the sacrament of Matrimony, the unity and

* “Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost,” p. 180.

indissolubility of Christian marriage, the root of the Christian world; and so on. Each one embodies, teaches, and requires faith in a constellation of Christian truths; and the seven sacraments of the Church are a record, or Scripture of God, anterior to the written Gospels of the Evangelists. Much more the divine worship of the universal Church, of which one of these seven sacraments is the centre, namely, the sacrifice and sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The incarnation, redemption, and consubstantial union of the Mystical Body with its Head, the communion of saints and of souls departed, are therein incorporated and manifested. All truths congregate around the altar, as all truths radiate from Jesus Christ. The whole revelation of Christianity is reflected in it."

I am as yet rather stating the Catholic theory than proving it. But to complete the statement, another important consideration must be added. The Protestant supposition seems to be, that Christianity is a divine philosophy, that can first be delivered orally and then committed to writing; not that Protestants deny its living power, its influence on life, its tendency to realise itself in action, and to pervade and transform society. Still it is a philosophy, doctrinal or moral. Its acceptance, and, consequently, its influence, might be interrupted for a time, even for ages; yet if it were

consigned to a book, it might, after such interruption, find fresh readers, and a new and even greater realisation. This is what Protestants believe really to have happened.

In the Catholic theory, such an interruption in the tradition of Christianity would be its destruction. A doctrine, like that of almsgiving, for instance, may be conceived to lie dormant in a book for ages, and then to strike root in the congenial soil of a better generation of readers, and bear fruit a hundredfold.

But a supernatural Ritual does not admit of interruption. Any breach of continuity would be its destruction. Like the heaven-descended fire on the Jewish altar, it must never be allowed to die out, or it cannot be rekindled except by miracle.

A supernatural Ritual, such as that in which Catholics believe, presupposes divine institution. The Catholic Church does not claim any power to institute fresh sacraments. Those that she possesses she believes to have been given to her by her divine Founder. Among them is one to perpetuate the priesthood, without which some of the other sacraments could not be administered. Her Ritual, therefore, involves a priesthood; her priesthood, a hierarchy; her hierarchy, a divinely-founded, perpetual, and indefectible Church.

All these things, if so be, may be read of in the Bible, but they cannot by any possibility be originated

from the Bible, any more than—to compare human things to divine—an electric battery can be originated from a mere treatise on electricity. As an experiment in chemistry requires, besides the book, the possession of Nature's forces, so Ritual requires, besides the Bible, the transmission of heavenly grace. The power to forgive sins, for example, must be derived from the breath that Jesus Christ breathed eighteen centuries ago, not from men who read of it eighteen centuries after it has been breathed. If it did not start into existence then, if it has not continued in existence ever since, if the Holy Ghost, imparted to men, as Catholics believe, by that breath, has not been imparted to men in unbroken succession from that day till now, then the sacrament of penance can never begin to exist. From this statement of Catholic belief it will be clear that even if we granted that "the written Word was one in origin, in authority, and in substance with the oral Word," yet we could never admit the substitution of the former for the latter in any epoch of the Church's history.

The difference between Catholics and Protestants on this point is an all-important one. How can it be settled?

3. *Mode of settling the controversy.*

It must be remembered that it is a question of God's will, not of human theories. It is not a proper subject

for mere reasonings as to the nature of written or oral teaching ; such considerations may come in to explain God's providence, but His providence itself must be known from His own revelation of it. God's providence in other matters is often so very different from what our conjectures would have been, that a man may well hesitate to affirm, simply on his own estimate of what is fitting, whether God would entrust His revelation to Scripture only, to tradition only, or to Scripture and tradition conjointly.

The author above quoted, admits this:—"The entire question," he says of Scripture and tradition "is one of fact." But he adds, what I can by no means admit, though he gives it in the form of a self-evident conclusion :—"Therefore," he says, "concerning this fact we can know nothing beyond what is left on record in Scripture." I cannot admit this, because it is a pure assumption, and virtual begging of the question. Besides, it is contrary to the mode universally adopted of investigating facts. We seek to become acquainted with them by consulting every available historic source. We do not say *beforehand*: I will receive no information except from this or that channel. If we confine ourselves to one particular authority, it can only be after having proved the worthlessness of all others.

Let us suppose a somewhat parallel case. Just as

the Catholic Church claims to be the work of the Apostles, so the United States claim to be the work of the first framers of American independence.

Now it is at least conceivable, that some one should start up and say, that he has conclusive proof that the present American constitution in no way represents the intentions of those whose names are signed to the articles of 1778; and that the tradition which attributes it to them is without foundation in fact. He might maintain that there was at a very early date a wide departure from their plan, and that the present government is a mere corruption of the original idea.

Should some one put forward such a theory, he would be called upon for proof. The burden of proof would lie upon him. It would be said that the present constitution was in possession. The constant tradition of the nation would be brought as a great *à priori* presumption against our theorist. He would be told that there were almost innumerable historical monuments which contradicted his position. He would be asked what he had to say against them. - Suppose then that he answered: "I will examine no historical monuments, I will accept no evidence whatever, but the draft of the constitution itself, the written document which is in everybody's hands. The entire question is one of fact. *Therefore* concerning this fact we can know nothing beyond what is left on record in the articles them-

selves." Would such a theorist be listened to? Would he be allowed thus to put aside, with a wave of his hand, all the evidence to which the whole world, except himself, appealed? Of course, the draft of the constitution would be a most important document. It might even, on examination, turn out to be the only trustworthy document. But it is certain, that no one would accept it as such beforehand, and without inquiry.

And yet this is just how the case stands as between Protestants and Catholics. The primary question at issue between them is as to the mode by which our Blessed Lord, the acknowledged Founder of the Christian faith, and His Apostles, His acknowledged and authorised representatives, intended the Christian religion to be transmitted to subsequent generations of men. To this question two answers are popularly given.

The large majority of those who bear the name of Christian reply, that Jesus Christ chose tradition or a teaching Church as the exponent and vehicle of His revelation, and that to tradition also He entrusted many inspired documents of incalculable importance in the correct and fruitful transmission of His revelation, yet utterly unfit to take the place of tradition itself, and never destined to do so by their authors or by the Holy Ghost who inspired them.

This is a perfectly intelligible answer, and being the voice of a large majority, is entitled to at least a respectful hearing.

A second popular answer is that commonly known as the Protestant theory. Lord Macaulay says it is ruinous to Protestants to abandon the axiom of Chillingworth: The Bible alone is the religion of Protestants. It is asserted, then, by very many Protestants, that it was the intention of Jesus Christ, that certain books should be to each individual (at least, after their general promulgation) the only *authentic* source from which to gather the knowledge of Christianity. This, setting aside different theories regarding the number, the inspiration and the interpretation of these books, seems the general Protestant answer. And it deserves also a respectful hearing, from the number and ability of those who have given and defended it.

How can we decide between these two answers, except by weighing the evidence or reasons which either party can adduce as to the fact in question? A Catholic has to bring proof from history, or from Scripture (which is also history) in support of what he maintains to have been the will of Jesus Christ; he may confirm his historical proof by arguments of reason. He must refute those reasons or proofs adduced by Protestants for their view. The Protestant on his side has to refute the Catholic arguments, and to bring

historical evidence (from Scripture or elsewhere) in support of what he maintains. But he has evidently no right, until he has proved the absence of all other authentic historical evidence, to say, "The question" as to the intention of Jesus Christ "is one of fact, one *therefore* respecting which we can know nothing, beyond what is left on record in Scripture."

CHAPTER IX.

RITUAL A DIVINE WITNESS.

IN the last chapter I have vindicated the claim of tradition to be heard in its own defence ; yet in this Essay I am appealing not to tradition but to Scripture. I ask, not what does Ritual say about its own origin, but what does the New Testament say about the tradition of Ritual. Do the Scriptures of the New Testament altogether condemn tradition and class it among the lying inventions with which the spirit of darkness deludes his followers, as some men pretend ? Or do they allow that it may serve a temporary purpose, and then yield place to themselves and become obsolete, as others maintain ? Or do they suppose that it has a perpetual office, and is essential, by the will of God, to the transmission of Christianity, as Catholics teach ? These are the questions now to be answered.

I. And first, Does the New Testament entirely condemn tradition ? Among the many charges made by Dr Vaughan against Ritualists (under which name he includes Catholics), is one which is often repeated by

Protestants, and which I therefore notice, though in itself it is scarcely deserving of attention.

It is well known that our Blessed Lord severely denounced the Pharisees, because "they made void the commandment of God that they might keep their own tradition" (Mark, vii. 9), and He applied to them the words of the prophet, "In vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and precepts of men" (v. 7).

It is asserted then that Catholics and Pharisees are in this respect just alike. Dr Vaughan even considers that Catholics were aimed at by Jesus Christ still more than His contemporaries. I will not deprive him, however, of whatever benefit his argument may derive from his own statement of it. I will give it in full.

"Our Lord knew," he says, "that the sin of the Pharisees had been a besetting sin of human nature in all past time; and he knew that it would remain a besetting sin of human nature through long centuries to come. He knew that the great sin of the world hitherto had been creature worship. He knew that the next sin to that, and a sin naturally connected with it, had been a superstitious reliance upon ceremonies. He knew, moreover, that the course of multitudes to whom his Gospel was to be sent would be, not to reject it, so much as to corrupt it, and to corrupt it after the Pharisaic manner. His lessons on this subject, accordingly, were designed, not so much for a few men then living, as for the gene-

rations of men to whom his words would pass to the end of time. He knew that the Christian Church would have her Elders as the Jewish Church had them ; that she would have her traditions as that Church had them ; and that she would have her Ritual superstitions bearing a strong resemblance to those then prevalent. On no other ground can we understand why the Gospels should have given us this everlasting Pharisee. We know that the Pharisee who comes up thus in the pages of the Gospel, comes up after the same manner in the pages of church history, presenting the same type, and filling about the same space."

I have examined in a former chapter this pretended resemblance between Catholics and Pharisees, and will not repeat what I then said. I will confine myself to the question of Tradition.

The answer to this objection is very easily found. Our Blessed Lord does not condemn the Pharisees for following tradition, but for following *their* traditions, human traditions, false traditions, traditions contrary no less to the real and authentic tradition of the Jews than to the written law.

The religion of the Jews was at no time a mere book-revelation. Antecedent to and concurrent with the writings from time to time given to them by their legislator and their prophets, was the great national tradition,—their polity and worship. At the time of our

Lord, sects and heresies had been formed, like those of the Pharisees and Sadducees, some taking from, others adding to, the ancient and authentic tradition. What Jesus Christ blames in the Pharisees is, that they magnify their sectarian traditions, and by so doing undermine the moral law. What is there in this that bears the slightest resemblance to the conduct of Catholics? We follow no sectarian traditions; we call ourselves by no party names; we admit no human precept in opposition to the law of God.

We admit tradition, we attach great importance to Apostolic tradition; therefore we are like the Pharisees! Do Protestants then deny all traditions? Is it maintained that tradition is essentially evil? But even Protestants admit, as we have seen, that the Christian faith was taught first traditionally, that several generations of Christians, and those the most heroic, had little besides tradition to instruct and guide them. Is it possible that educated and earnest men should argue, from the condemnation of false and immoral traditions, that all traditions are false and immoral? Because the Pharisees prayed at the corners of the streets, is all prayer condemned? Because the Pharisees disfigured their faces when they fasted, is all fasting hypocritical? Because the Pharisees sounded a trumpet before them when they gave alms, are we never to relieve the poor? It would be as reasonable to maintain this as to say that, because the

Pharisees followed false traditions, we are not to follow those that are true. Examine our traditions ; prove them to be false, to be human, to be immoral, and then triumph over us and call us Pharisees ; but do not use the childish argument of a mere play upon words ; and because the word tradition has acquired a bad fame among Protestants try to prove that it deserves it, because certain traditions were condemned by Jesus Christ.

Do the apocryphal gospels and epistles, which abounded in early ages of the Christian Church, disprove the authentic writings of the Apostles? If not—and no Protestant can assert that they do—then why are apocryphal traditions to throw discredit on everything that bears the name of tradition?

The common Protestant notion is, that if once it is allowed that there could be Apostolic traditions, not committed to writing by the Apostles themselves, a door is opened through which any and every kind of human invention and corruption can be introduced into the Church. In other words, they think that there is no test to distinguish between true and false traditions, between Apostolic traditions and later innovations. Let them not be uneasy. The very same means exist of sifting traditions and verifying those that are authentic, that there is for sifting early Christian writings and verifying those that are inspired.

It is not here the place to enter upon the subject of

the canon of the New Testament ; but I would beg any one, who has made that matter a careful study, to consider whether the same tests and the same authority to apply them, were not available for Apostolic oral traditions, including Ritual, that were employed in ascertaining the genuine writings of apostles and evangelists. Those who have not studied the history of the formation of the canon are quite incompetent to pronounce a judgment on the origin and formation of Ritual.

It may be said, perhaps, that the words or acts by which the Apostles are supposed to have given rise to certain ritualistic practices—such, for example, as the sign of the cross, or the observance of Lent—have not been preserved, and therefore we cannot be certain that these traditions are Apostolic. But so, too, “the originals of the Gospels, in all probability, perished at a very early period. No autograph of any one of them, so far as appears, was in existence when the canon of the New Testament was completed ; nor do we read of any one who had ever seen them.”* Yet as the copies of Apostolic writings have the same value as the originals, so have the repetitions of Apostolic acts and teaching.

How do we know what books constitute the New Testament ? By authority relying on tradition. How do we know what sacraments, rites, observances, are Apostolic ? By the very same means.

* “*Liber Librorum*,” p. 79.

That the Holy Eucharist is a sacrifice, that prayers should be offered for the dead, that marriage, holy orders, extreme unction, are sacraments conveying grace,—these and similar traditions are as easily and certainly proved to be Apostolic, as that St Mark wrote a gospel, that St Paul wrote epistles to the Corinthians, and that these writings were inspired by the Holy Ghost.

But before we take leave of the argument against tradition, which has given occasion to these reflections, it is but fair to see whether the words of our Blessed Lord have no application to Protestants. It is certain that Protestants, no less than Catholics go by tradition; though Protestant traditions are modern, local, changeable, not ancient, and universal, and immutable like those of Catholics. "The truth is," says Mr Gladstone, in his remarks on "*Ecce Homo*," "that we are all of us *traditioners* in a degree much greater than we think. What we suppose to be from Scripture is really, as a general rule, from the catechism, or the schoolmaster, or the preacher, or the school of thought, in immediate contact with which we have been brought up." A Protestant may repudiate tradition; may try to exercise his private judgment on Scripture, unfettered by the school or sect with which he has been associated; he may study Scripture without note or comment, yet even then he will not escape the,

influence of tradition. He cannot put from his mind his past thoughts and character, and these have been, in a great measure, formed by the tradition in the midst of which he has lived. It has been most truly said: "Our real commentators are our strongest traits of character; and we usually come out of the Bible with all those texts sticking to us which our idiosyncrasies attract." *

We have a painful example of this in the very accusation against Catholics which I have copied from Dr Vaughan.

How came he to see the Catholic in the Pharisee? How came he to see a condemnation of the Catholic mode of teaching in that of the Rabbinical traditions? The explanation is, that he was himself under the influence of tradition, of the tradition of the elders, of Calvin, Luther, Cranmer, Knox and the rest. It was these elders who originated such preposterous interpretations. There was Ridley, for example, who said that Catholic priests were "false thieves and jugglers who have bewitched the minds of the simple people, and have brought them from the true worship of God to pernicious idolatry."† And the Anglican Church caught up and repeated this, and the like ribaldries, and repeated them till they grew into a tradition;

* Henry Ward Beecher.

† Quoted with approval by Dr White.

and it became a fashion to believe, as it is still with some, that "laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees, had been drowned in damnable idolatry, most detested by God and damnable to man, for eight hundred years and more" before the Protestant Reformation.* A horrible doctrine certainly, yet necessary to justify their schism. But to make such a tradition in any way plausible, it was necessary to wrench texts of Scripture into arguments for its support; and so the Pharisees were selected to represent the followers of the old faith, and the Apostolical traditions compared to the Cabbala of Jewish Rabbis. Such is one of the traditions of the Protestant elders; and on traditions like this the minds of some of our modern controversialists seem to have been formed.

Among the Jews the Rabbinical traditions were of a later origin than either Scripture or the real Mosaic and prophetic traditions; so, too, among Protestants these traditions of their elders are not yet four hundred years old. And I will now show that these new and false traditions render illusory the precepts and promises of God as contained in Holy Scripture.

If there is no profanity in imitating the conduct of

* Homily of the Anglican Church. Well might Digby say that "really it would be better to believe every syllable of the golden legend than admit such a position."

Dr Vaughan and applying our divine Master's words to modern controversy, I would venture to address writers like those with whom I am engaged in this manner. "Jesus Christ said, 'Preach the gospel to every creature. . . . I am with you all days to the consummation of the world. . . . He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me. . . . But the gates of hell shall not prevail against my Church.' But *you* say, 'The gates of hell did prevail for eight hundred years and more ; Jesus Christ is not with the Church but with the Bible ; he that reads the Bible may despise the living teachers.' Thus do you make void the word of God by your tradition that you have given forth."

Nay, more ! The Protestant tradition makes the providence of God too harsh to be admitted without proofs far more convincing than any that are offered.

We are told that towards the beginning of the fourth century the canon of the New Testament was at length completed and generally accepted, and that thereupon the old rule of faith, oral tradition, became antiquated. It had been a transitory form of communicating the knowledge of the truth, and truth now took its only permanent form in the promulgated canon ; and this became the sole rule of faith to later generations, as oral tradition had been to the first.

But history tells us that, almost immediately after

the period appointed by this supposed providence of God for the substitution of the book for the Church, the civilisation of Greece and Rome, in which the use of books was comparatively easy and general, was swept away by the incursions of barbarian hordes, and gave place to that state of ignorance and anarchy in which the individual possession and study of the Bible was a sheer impossibility to the immense majority of Christians. Thus, then, the age that could read had no Bible to read, and the age that possessed the Bible was not able to read it, though now it had become indispensable ! We are asked to accept so mysterious, not to say cruel, a providence of God ; and if we demur, if we say God had no such providence, God never substituted either in the fourth or in the sixteenth century a written rule of faith for an oral one ; God appointed tradition, divine, universal, unchangeable tradition, as the living rule of faith for all men, from the first day of the Church to the last ; if we say this, and prove what we say from the Old Testament, from the New Testament, from the visible facts of history and from the nature of things, we are to be called Pharisees, and to be likened to the lawyers who took away the key of knowledge ! As if those who assert that God required the reading of the Bible in ages when it was impossible, and from millions to whom it is now and ever will be impossible, and forbid them to

believe in the tradition of the Church, did not "take away the key of knowledge" far more effectually; and those who speak with such contempt of the multitudes of the Church's children, were not far more like the Pharisees who said, "This multitude are accursed that knoweth not the law" (John vii. 49).

2. But it is time now to state some of the Scriptural arguments in favour of tradition, and to show how they bear on the question of Ritual.

Though I am limited to the New Testament, yet one passage from the prophets, speaking of the times of the New Testament, will be easily allowed.

It was foretold by the prophet Jeremias, as the distinguishing mark of the Church of the latter days, that there should be one universal faith, easy of access to all. "I will write my law in their hearts, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brethren, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least of them even to the greatest, saith the Lord (Jer. xxxi. 34).

I need not say that this promise of the Interior Teacher is not to be understood as if no exterior teacher, whether book or Church, would be requisite. It is a promise of a spirit that shall simplify and vivify other modes of teaching. It cannot be interpreted as if contrary to the commission given to the Apostles, "Go and teach all nations." It is, however, a clear

promise that the knowledge of God in the Christian Church shall be a common property, and that where the Spirit of God is, there the din of sects shall not be heard, as it is among Protestants, each sect exclaiming to the other, "Know the Lord!"

It seems almost needless to prove here that this unanimity of faith is not and never has been the result of the Protestant use of the Bible. It is equally certain that it is and has been the result of the traditional method of teaching used in the Catholic Church. If I conclude, then, that the Spirit of God—the Interior Teacher—was promised to the traditional method, I am but interpreting prophecy by its manifest fulfilment.

But let me here point out how Ritual helps to make unity easily attainable; how it summarises, so to say, a doctrine, in so palpable a manner, that it is known alike to the simple and the learned. An illustration from what is before the eyes of all will make this clear.

What disputes have agitated the Protestant world of late years in England and America regarding the Eucharist! What a Babel of voices, each crying, "Know the Lord!" and yet, not only they do not succeed in convincing opponents, but they are scarcely able to make clear to others what it is that they believe themselves. In spite of the multitude of books, it is

almost impossible to discover what doctrine each sect even *wishes* to teach. This is not so in the Catholic Church. It is perfectly well known to every one what *she* wishes to teach. She has so clear a method of expressing her faith, that it is known alike to her children and to her enemies. That method is Ritual. Every part of her Ritual of the holy Eucharist proclaims her belief in the Real Presence. The most simple cannot mistake it, the most subtle cannot evade it.

It has been the custom from the very earliest times to reserve the blessed sacrament for the communion of the sick and the adoration of the faithful; and as soon as the cessation of persecution made it safe to do so, a lamp was lighted before the place where the holy Eucharist was kept. There are abundant proofs that this practice has continued for at least fourteen hundred years. That lamp is not the symbol of the peculiar opinions of this or that priest or bishop; it is the symbol of the Church's ancient, universal, unchangeable faith—*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. But the little flame of that lamp casts so steady a light, that from the Pope to the beggar-man all know that when that lamp is seen burning, it is a signal to fall down and worship, like the Wise Men when the star rested over the "place where the Child was," in Bethlehem.

But did Jesus Christ, did His Apostles, intend that the gospel should be made known to men by means such as these? I ask not, was the doctrine I have just mentioned taught by Him? for the solution of that question depends upon a previous one. Before we can know what are the doctrines and the practices of His religion, we must know by what means He intended such knowledge to reach us. Protestants appeal to Scripture: what does Scripture say?

It says *not one word* to indicate that the Christian faith and life are ever to be derived from a book independently of tradition. Tradition indeed tells us of a book. Tradition puts that book into our hands, and tells us its origin, its nature, and its use. The Church tells us how carefully she collected the writings of her early teachers, how she slowly and laboriously examined her various local traditions which had handed down the oral teaching of Apostles that *this* volume was inspired, and *that* was not; how, after tolerating local errors for a time, at length, relying on the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost, she drew up her catalogue of sacred books, and no longer allowed a dissentient voice.

But the same tradition that informs us of the number and nature of the inspired volumes, tells us also that the truth and discipline of Christ are handed down in Apostolic traditions equally deserving of veneration,

and it denies altogether the substitution of the written volume in their place.

But if tradition tells us of Scripture, Scripture also tells us of tradition. Not from Scripture alone could we know that Jesus Christ intended Scripture to have any place at all in His kingdom. Of the Old Testament He ever speaks with veneration ; but were we left to our own conjectures, perhaps we should have concluded from a study of His life that Scriptures were in His plan to have no part in the future kingdom of God.

Something like the argument which Dr Vaughan framed against Ritual, and which I considered in the first chapter, might have occurred to me against the use of book-teaching under the new dispensation, and with more plausibility. I might have said to myself that in dealing with the Jews as with an unspiritual people, God had made provision for the writing and reading of the law. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it to the priests, and commanded after seven years . . . when all Israel come together . . . thou shalt read the words of the law before all Israel, in their hearing, . . . that hearing they may learn, and fear the Lord" (Deut. xxxi. 9-12). But I should perhaps have said, that God promised that this should not be in the fulness of times—that the prophet had foretold, "Behold the day shall come, saith the Lord,

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and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, . . . *not* according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, . . . but this shall be the covenant: . . . I will give my law in their bowels and I will *write it in their heart*, and I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jer. xxxi. 31-33). And I should have been confirmed in my belief that writing belonged to Jews, and not to Christians, by the fact that Moses wrote his law and commanded it to be read, while Jesus Christ did not write His law, but sent men to preach it, and promised to them the Holy Ghost. This is what I should probably have concluded from Scripture *alone*; and as Dr Vaughan argued that because there is no book of Leviticus in the New Testament, therefore no Ritual, I might have argued, with greater force, that because there was no word said about writing by Jesus Christ, therefore revelation through books was now abolished.

But in this I should have been wrong, just as Dr Vaughan was wrong in his reasoning. The *event* proves that Scripture has a place in the Church of Christ, just as the event also proves that Ritual has a place.

And yet my conjectures would not have been altogether wrong. Scripture has not the same place in the Christian Church as in that of the Jews, just as Ritual also is of a different nature. The Holy Ghost

is given to the Church as He was not given to the synagogue, and both Scripture and Ritual fulfil in His hands a higher office than they did before the day of Pentecost.*

Yet though Jesus Christ intended to confer upon His Church the inestimable treasure of the Gospel, Epistles, &c., of the New Testament, no such intention is expressed among His recorded sayings. If He gave personally any precept to any of His Apostles to write, it could only be among the "many things" which the Gospels do not state. What they *do* state is, that He chose tradition as the means of making known His precepts to the world, and that in speaking of tradition He laid a special stress on Ritual: "Teach ye all nations, *baptizing them*" (Matt. xxviii. 19): "Taking bread, He gave thanks and brake, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you. *Do this for a commemoration of Me*" (Luke xxii. 19).

That the Apostles of Jesus Christ intended their writings to be used in the Christian Church is evident from the mere fact of their writing; and of the value and importance of their writings there never could be a question among those who believe in their divine commission. And St Paul imposes on the Thessa-

* For a full development of this important subject the reader may consult "The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost," by the Archbishop of Westminster.

lonians the precept : "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren" (1 Thes. v. 27), and again on the Colossians, "When this epistle shall have been read with you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that you read also that which is of the Laodiceans" (Col. iv. 16). The importance, then, of Scripture, as superadded to oral tradition, is self-evident, and has been defined by the Council of Trent; but in vain would you seek in the pages of the New Testament for proof or hint that any Apostle contemplated a time when Scripture should supplant tradition, and when, by the promulgation and acceptance of Scripture, tradition should lose its authentic character and authoritative force.

St Paul tells the Thessalonians to "stand fast, and hold the traditions which they have received, whether by word or by epistle" (2 Thes. ii. 14). A recent Protestant writer has affirmed that this proves nothing in favour of tradition, "unless it can be shown that the traditions St Paul refers to were distinct from, or additional to, what is now embodied in the Gospels and the Epistles."* This is a strange assertion. Surely since tradition was then in possession, and has never relinquished possession since, before it can be summarily ejected it must be clearly proved either that the present tradition is not that of Apostolic

* "Liber Librorum," p. 176.

times, or that Scripture is co-extensive with Apostolic tradition, has a similar nature, a like power, is able to supply its place, and was intended to supplant it. Unless all these things are proved, tradition is in lawful possession, and as it certainly obtained possession by the will of God, we must believe that by the same will it is in possession at the present day.

Moreover tradition may not yield possession without a new declaration of the will of God. The living teachers of the Church have received Revelation as a trust. Let us hear the commission: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding the profane novelties of words. . . . Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus. Keep the good thing committed to thy trust *by the Holy Ghost*, . . . and the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also. . . . Evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, erring and driving into error; but continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. . . . All Scripture inspired by God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work. I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall

judge the living and the dead, by His coming and His kingdom, preach the Word," &c. (1 Tim. vi. 20 ; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14 ; ii. 2 ; iii. 14 ; iv. 1).

Here is an Apostle of Jesus Christ making express provision for the transmission of the faith and discipline of his Master, now that he himself is near his death. He looks forward to the future, even to the distant future, the latter days ; he foresees errors, profane novelties, evil men, and seducers. What means does he provide for the safe custody of the religion he has planted with so much labour ? What precautions does he take against the dangers that threaten it ? Does he say that tradition is an unsafe guardian, that it has nearly done its work, that it must soon yield to Scripture ? Does he tell Timothy to multiply copies of the epistles he has received, and of all other portions of Apostolic writings which he can collect, and to spread them among the people ? Does he speak of the printing-press* or of Bible Societies ? No. He speaks of the fulfilment of a sacred trust ; and that trust is to preach the doctrine received, and to hand it on as a sacred trust to other men.

There can be no doubt that what St Paul said to

* I do not wish to treat so serious a matter with ridicule ; yet it sounds ridiculous even to state the Protestant theory. If Jesus Christ had been of the advice of George III., who said, " I wish every child in my dominions to be able to read the Bible," why did he not invent the printing-press ? Would it not, in the Protestant hypothesis, have been a greater boon than the Sacraments which He did invent ?

Timothy, he said also to the other teachers whom he left behind him. Indeed we have written evidence of this in his address to the "ancients of Ephesus." He speaks to them also of the wolves, and refers them to his oral teaching: "I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God;" and then warns them: "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 27, 28). St Timothy, no doubt, fulfilled his charge. What he had received orally and personally he committed orally and personally to faithful men, that is, both doctrine and Ritual. Those faithful men were commanded to do the same to another generation of faithful men after them. When was this to cease? It was a trust for which they were to render an account to God. When were they to consider that their trust had lapsed? Would they have been "faithful men" had they done so at any time without an express declaration of the will of God? If that charge of St Paul was given by divine authority, then it is certain that had those men who received the deposit in direct succession from the Apostles—*quasi per manus*—relinquished that deposit, no matter when—in the fourth century, in the sixteenth century, in the nineteenth century;—had they said that their authoritative guardianship of the faith and wor-

ship, discipline and government of the Church had now had its time, since the canon was promulgated, or printing invented—they would have sinned against the Holy Ghost, who had committed to them the deposit, and set them to rule the Church, and would have betrayed the Blood of Jesus Christ, with which the Church was purchased.

If I seem to dwell at disproportionate length on this part of my subject, it is because in this matter of tradition lies the root of the whole controversy between Catholics and Protestants. But having now stated as I think sufficiently the direct Scripture evidence for the existence and authority of tradition, I may in the next chapters consider the relation which subsists between that part of tradition we call Ritual and the New Testament Scriptures. With two short yet important reflections I will conclude this chapter. First, then, if it should seem to any one that, after all, Tradition must, from its very nature, be an unsafe guardian of Revelation, I would remark that the Holy Ghost himself is the Author and Guardian of Tradition. The “good thing” is committed to Timothy’s trust “by the Holy Ghost” (2 Tim. i. 14). It is the Holy Ghost who has appointed those whom St Paul addresses at Ephesus to rule the Church (Acts xx. 28). And though St Paul knows that each of these men in himself is fallible, and may prove unfaithful, though he knows that “wolves

will enter, not sparing the flock," though he knows that "of their own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," though he fears for individual souls, he fears not for the faith or for the Church, because it is purchased by the blood of God, and that God has said "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Again, though Scripture is no substitute for tradition, it is a great support to it. St Paul therefore tells Timothy the uses that he, the guardian of tradition, may make of the Scriptures of the Old Testament in fulfilling his charge ; and since the Apostle says that all Scripture, which is inspired, is useful for the same purpose, when the New Testament was completed, collected, and declared by the Church to be inspired, it was necessarily employed by Timothy's successors as the Old Testament had been by Timothy himself.

CHAPTER X.

TRADITION THE TEST OF SCRIPTURE.

TRADITION, of which, as we have seen, Ritual is no inconsiderable part, is not merely a witness to revelation independent of Scripture ; it is the principal witness to Scripture itself. Indeed, it is to tradition that we owe the Bible in its collected form. This statement will require some elucidations.

It is almost inevitable that Protestants, on hearing of tradition, should form their conception of it from the only traditions with which they are practically conversant—those of their own Churches. This would be a fatal confusion. That I am not rash, however, in providing against it will be clear from the passage I am about to quote from the late Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Whately. In his annotations on Bacon's Essays occur the following words :—" Many defend oral tradition on the ground that we have the Scriptures themselves by tradition. Would they think that, because they could trust most servants to deliver a letter, however long or important, therefore they could trust them to deliver its contents in a message by word

of mouth? Take a familiar case. A footman brings you a letter from a friend, upon whose word you can perfectly rely, giving an account of something that has happened to himself, and the exact truth of which you are greatly concerned to know. While you are reading and answering the letter, the footman goes into the kitchen, and there gives your cook an account of the same thing, which he says he overheard the upper servants at home talking over, as related to them by the valet, who said he had it from your friend's son's own lips. The cook relates the story to the groom, and he in turn tells you. Would you judge of that *story* by the letter, or of the *letter* by the story?" Such is the argument and illustration of the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin. And it was by shallow sophisms like this that he gained the reputation of a clever logician!

When this publication of 'Dr Whately appeared a writer in a Catholic periodical made some remarks on this passage, which I abridge.

"Consider," he says, "what this argument supposes. There is the individual soul to which God wishes to make a communication; He therefore sends to it a letter by a footman. Now, who or what is this footman? It is no other than the Church, of which the soul may perhaps aspire to be a member,—say the billionth part. Yet this soul, forsooth, is the master, and the millions are the footman. This soul has direct

communication with God, and the other millions have simply received from Him a *sealed* letter, and have only learned its contents from the kitchen conversation of the valet and the cook ! These millions obsequiously bring to the soul, enthroned in its solitary pride, the sealed book, and say : O happy soul ! to whom it is reserved to look on that which is forbidden to our eyes, receive this book. To you only is it given to peruse its contents. Open it and read, and judge for yourself about the meaning thereof.

“And then the soul, after it has received, and studied, and understood, and believed the book, and become a member of the Church, and in union with God, and a scholar of the Holy Spirit, and a partaker of the unction whereby wisdom is given, must dissemble all this knowledge—must become an infinitesimal fraction of a footman ; and must, as one of the deputation, carry the same book to the next soul, pretending to know nothing of it, never to have seen the inside, and to have only indirect evidence of the contents.”*

Such is Dr Whately's conception of the Christian Church. His knowledge of the nature of Holy Scripture is of much the same stamp.

He compares the New Testament to a letter, written for the purpose of communicating full information regarding a most important occurrence, of which the

* “Rambler,” March 1857.

reader hitherto knows nothing, but of which he will desire to know the "exact truth."

Yet the New Testament, on the very surface of it, is the exact contrary of all this; it is a letter intended for a reader who knows almost everything already, containing therefore, together with some further details, references and hints of which the reader only has the key.

How can we account for a whole series of blunders like these on the part of a man who was certainly shrewd and clever? I believe the explanation will be found in the stand-point from which he viewed the question.

Dr Whately was a member of a Church cut off from the Christendom of the present day, and which had abruptly severed itself from the stream of Christian tradition three centuries ago. No doubt, in the course of those three centuries the Church to which he belonged had created new traditions of its own; and I have not the least doubt, also, but that Dr Whately was strongly influenced by those traditions, in spite of what he thought his freedom of inquiry. Yet he was too clear-sighted consciously to submit to traditions of which he so well knew the nature and origin. Hence he tried to read the New Testament in a spirit of isolation, or what some call "individuality," others "independent research." He knew well that the mil-

lions of his own Church had read the Bible before him ; but as he knew also that they had no better means of getting at its contents than himself, and that the traditions which they had they professed to have derived only from Scripture, he of course would make light of such testimony, and go to the fountain-head himself.

When, then, the objection was stated to him that the Bible itself came to him by the tradition of the Church, the words *church* and *tradition* presented no other ideas to his mind than those of his own Church and its traditions. Being endowed with considerable reliance on his own judgment, and having little respect for the traditions of his own sect, it was not so unnatural as it may seem at first sight for him to call himself the friend of the Letter-writer, and to look on the society which brought him the letter merely as the Letter-writer's footman, and that society's traditions as little better than a footman's *gossip*. He naturally said to himself, that the society or Church of which he was a dignitary was well enough able to reprint and distribute, and so hand down, the Bible,—as society hands down Thucydides or Cicero, or, to use his own phrase, “as most servants might be trusted to carry a letter ;”—but as for that Church's oral traditions, he knew them and their character and variations too well to value them above the “stories” of cooks and grooms.

Dr Whately's characteristic intellectual weakness was

his inability to put himself into the position of others, and therefore so much as to comprehend objections. In the present case he does not seem to have had even a vague conception of what Catholics mean by tradition when it is said that we have the Bible by tradition.

As this is a very important point, it will be well to enter into some explanations. First, then, it is surely not meant that the Church hands down the Bible just as society hands down any other ancient books. For so natural and material a work as the safe transmission of a written or printed volume the continual presence of the Holy Ghost would not be required. This presence is claimed for a far higher work,—for the verifying the sacredness of the books no less than for the safe custody and defence of them.

We mean that the primitive Christian society, or the Church, received from the Apostles the full tradition of the Christian revelation before the New Testament was written; so that the Apostles, before they left the earth, could say to all their disciples, as St Paul to the clergy of Ephesus, "I take you to witness this day that I am clear from the blood of all men, for I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts xx. 26, 27). This he said at a time when, according to Horne, three of the Gospels were not yet written, and few of the Epistles; and when certainly those Epistles which had been written were quite unknown at Ephesus.

The "whole counsel of God" was known therefore before the New Testament was written; and the most ardent advocates of Bible societies must admit that several generations of Christians lived and died practising the most heroic virtue without the Bible, by means of tradition; so that St Irenæus, writing in the middle of the second century, says:—"What if the Apostles had not left us writings? would it not have been needful to follow the order of that tradition which they delivered to those to whom they committed the Churches?—to which many of the barbarous nations who believe in Christ even now assent, having salvation written without paper and ink, by the Spirit in their hearts, sedulously guarding the old traditions."

Now it was this society, thus moulded, penetrated, and informed by the Christian faith and discipline, that received the New Testament. But what does that mean? Does it mean that those books were put, collected and bound in a volume, into the custody of the Church in the same way that they came from the hands of the Catholic Church into the hands of the society to which Dr Whately belonged, and which handed them down to him by a mere natural, and, as it were, manual tradition? Such a view would be contrary to the most elementary facts of history. Did any one ever yet assert that

St John or any of the Apostles gathered together the canonical books, and presented them to the mere material custody of the Church? It is notorious that they did not; and perhaps the providence of God allowed this for the purpose of depriving the future heresy regarding the use of the Bible of any specious support in history. The Christian society received the writings of the Apostles together with a multitude of other writings of various degrees of excellence. St Luke says, that even in his day "*many* had taken in hand to set forth in order a narration of the things that have been accomplished among us, according as they have delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses" (Luke i. § 1). There were then many Gospel histories in circulation: doubtless there were also many treatises on Christian doctrine and discipline. Many of these, as we know, were read, together with the writings of the Apostles, in the assemblies of the faithful. By degrees the Spirit of God who guided the Church made known that it was time to distinguish between the writings which bore authority and those which were merely read for edification, as well as between the latter and those which were unworthy and were to be rejected.

How was this sorting to be made? What was the test to be applied? Was it a mere historical and critical question as to the genuine writings of Apostles?

N

This could not be, for we find that that primitive society selected the Gospels of St Mark and St Luke, who were not of the twelve.

A recent author has confidently asserted that the test then applied was principally that of internal evidence, and that all Christians may have, and ought to have, a certain spiritual perception, which he calls "the verifying faculty," by which they may appreciate this internal evidence, and consequently know the divine character or inspiration of a book.

"The all-important inquiry is," he says, "not what the councils decided, but what reasons *Christians* had, in that day, for accepting certain books and rejecting others? And the true answer will probably be found partly in traditions, which were then comparatively fresh, and partly in that 'witness of the Spirit' to the truths embodied in the accepted books, which has been in all ages, and still is, the highest evidence of their canonicity."

He tells us also that, with regard to this verifying faculty, these first Christians "were but on a level with ourselves, as we again are, in this respect, on a level with those who spiritually lived on Scripture, long before its books were catalogued or any council had decided on the canon."*

To all this I would observe, in the first place, that

* "*Liber Librorum*," pp. 85, 87.

if words have any meaning, it was not to the faithful in general, but to the pastors of the Church that the custody of the deposit of revelation was committed. Let any one who doubts this read again the charge of St Paul to the elders at Ephesus and to St Timothy, quoted in chapter ix.

In the second place, I am very far from denying the value of internal evidence, or the existence of the verifying faculty in the Church, and even in individuals, in proportion as they are living in the full communion of the Church. The verifying faculty by which the Church formed the canon was the spiritual consciousness created in her by the presence of the Holy Ghost, and the possession of Apostolic tradition regarding the whole circle of revelation, together with the various local Apostolic traditions regarding the inspiration of each particular book. The certainty we have that the Church then judged aright is founded on our belief in the continual indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and the accomplishment of the promise of Jesus Christ: "I am with you all days." But if any man holds that the Church of the nineteenth century can err, or that of the sixteenth, he has no guarantee that the Church of the third or fourth century did not err in rejecting books that contained part of the deposit, and admitting books that have no divine authority.

And to say that we can control and ratify the

judgment of the Church of that age by the same spiritual faculty which Christians then possessed, is a double error on the part of Protestants. First, because, having separated from Christendom, they have not inherited the living tradition which formed the spiritual consciousness of the early Church ; and secondly, because now the very materials no longer exist on which that age passed judgment. First, I say, when tradition is lost, that which elicits and informs the verifying faculty is lost. I speak not now of the interior Teacher, the Holy Ghost, but of the means by which He teaches. No one but a pure rationalist will pretend that our mere natural reason can test divine revelation. The highest office it can perform unassisted is a negative one, to declare what contradicts its own principles and instincts. The author whose view I am considering does not attribute the verifying power to natural reason, but to "reason enlightened and sanctified by the Holy Ghost." In his explanation of his meaning he gives us some excellent reflections on the dispositions necessary to read the Bible so as to profit by it ; and on the important truth that God speaks only to those who listen with a docile heart.

But all this is beside the question. We admit, and we urge also, at the proper time, that the Holy Ghost must prepare the mind and heart of the faithful, in

order that they may appreciate or receive properly the truth and the law proposed to them, whether by the Bible or by oral tradition. But here the question is of a faculty of discerning between truth and error, between inspired and uninspired, so that nothing that is of man may be placed on the level of what comes from God, and nothing that is of the integrity of the faith may be cast aside and allowed to perish.

This distinction is of the utmost importance here. Now that the Bible is collected and stamped, as a whole, with authoritative recognition,¹ the want of a spiritual faculty to read and appreciate it is injurious only to him who is deficient. It does not destroy the Bible. Even if an individual reject parts of the Bible, he only rejects truth to his own loss; the Bible remains complete for others. Of course, if a whole sect or church reject a book or books, then the loss is more serious.* In such case the truths contained in that book are lost to all and to each; and since the verifying faculty is only formed by the possession of truth, *in so far* the verifying faculty is weakened or maimed.

“The light of which we speak,” says the writer I

* I am speaking here in the Protestant view, in answer to an argument. A Catholic, or a branch of the Catholic Church, could not reject any part of the Bible now without heresy. Before the authorised promulgation of the canon it was otherwise. But if any Church then rejected a book, it did not lose the truths contained in it, for it knew the “whole counsel of God” by tradition. It would be otherwise with Protestants.

have been quoting, "the quickening and elevating power in the strength of which we are to recognise the divine—is never attained except by spiritual culture effected through the instrumentality of the revelation itself. The Book, to be recognised and obeyed, must itself have more or less educated the consciousness which is to accept it. This is not more paradoxical than the kindred fact that before a man can judge as to the merits of an artist, he must to some extent be educated by the artist; or, to take a wider illustration, that a man must himself become civilised before he can perceive how great a blessing civilisation is." *

There is no doubt some truth in all this; but let us see how it affects the question of the canon of Scripture.

To take the illustration proposed. If each man deficient in civilisation could reject some civilising institution, and so gradually degrade his nation, if the nation that rejected some beneficent law could not only so far injure itself, but make the possession of such a law *for all future time* impossible, then woe to the posterity of such a misguided people. Such is not the case in art or in civilisation, but it is the case with regard to revelation. The Protestant Reformers rejected the tradition of prayers for the dead, and consequently, having maimed their "verifying faculty,"

* "Liber Librorum," p. 36.

they rejected the inspiration of the second book of Maccabees. Thanks to the Catholic Church, and also to printing, the book itself has not perished ; but *supposing* that doctrine to be revealed, and that book to have been inspired, even Protestants would admit that a great loss had been sustained by the successors of the Reformers. They would have been born into a diminished inheritance. The Book that alone can educate the verifying faculty having been curtailed, the faculty itself must have been injured.

Of course, I do not expect Protestants to admit the particular instance I have selected, but they must admit the principle, and since they do not assume the infallibility of the faculty in question, they must admit the possibility of the rejection of an inspired book or books by the early Church, and therefore that we now have neither the whole inspired Word of God, nor, therefore, a properly educated verifying faculty.

This is surely an important consideration which Protestants strangely neglect. They say that our Christian instincts at once perceive the difference between the four Gospels admitted into the canon, and those which have come down to us as apocryphal Gospels. This is true. But they forget that many more Gospels have not come down to us at all, and that they have perished, probably for no other reason than because the early Church declared them not inspired. We

have no right to say that those many primitive Gospels, of which St Luke speaks, bore any resemblance to the spurious Gospels which were the production of a later age. St Luke does not condemn them, nor even hint that they were untrustworthy or defective. Perhaps the saying of our divine Lord, "It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive," which is in none of the four Gospels, yet which was familiar to the elders of Ephesus when St Paul reminded them of it (Acts xx. 35), was recorded in one of those very Gospels of which St Luke speaks; and that written Gospel may have been in circulation at Ephesus. Perhaps in these Gospels there were many other equally precious sayings of our divine Redeemer; perhaps they contained a record of many acts of His which the other Evangelists have passed over. There is certainly nothing improbable in such a supposition. It has in it nothing to embarrass a Catholic who believes in the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost in the Church, and who accepts tradition, and not Scripture alone, as the channel of "the whole counsel of God." But it has in it much which ought to perplex a Protestant.

He thinks himself able to test what the primitive Church has handed down to him of Apostolic writings. Let us suppose him able to do so; yet he cannot apply a test to the writings which the primitive Church

rejected or allowed to perish. A learned Protestant writer says,—“We cannot doubt that St Paul did write *many* Epistles which are now lost. He himself mentions one such to the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. v. 9.); and it is a mysterious dispensation of Providence that his Epistles to the two great metropolitan Churches of Antioch and Ephesus, with which he was himself so peculiarly connected, should not have been preserved to us.”*

If *many* of St Paul's Epistles have perished, perhaps many writings of other Apostles have also perished by the same “mysterious dispensation of Providence.”

But how can a Protestant consistently maintain that this mysterious Providence has caused all essential truths to be preserved? He cannot test what was lost, so as to declare its worthlessness or its inutility, or so as to be able to affirm that it is supplied equivalently by what remains. There is certainly nothing contrary to received Protestant principles in the supposition of such an important loss. Those who maintain, like the Anglican Church in its homilies, that God left the whole Christian world “in damnable idolatry for eight hundred years and more,” are very inconsistent if they affirm as indubitable that God would not let any

* Conybeare and Howson—“Life and Epistles of St Paul,” c. xxv. note. It is not necessary to enter into the question of the title of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The fact in any case is certain that some of St Paul's Epistles have perished.

necessary Christian truth perish. This is to affirm and deny the supernatural providence of God in the same breath. And moreover it affirms it, where there is no promise, of a written revelation, and it denies it, where there is an express promise, of a traditional revelation.

Is the Bible, then, of more value than the Church? Is not the Bible made for the Church, not the Church for the Bible? These pretensions may remind some perhaps of the traditions of the Pharisees: "whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, is a debtor" (Matt. xxiii. 18). So this modern tradition runs:—"He that shall repudiate the Church, it is nothing; but he that shall repudiate the Bible (that was God's gift to the Church), he is an infidel."

We are accused of exaggerating the difficulties of proving the Bible in order to reduce men to the necessity of blind submission to the authority of the Church. Not so. We do but state the truth about the Bible, that it may be proved by its legitimate proofs, and not by arbitrary assumptions. We contend for every portion of the Bible. The Church's reputation is staked upon it. She has declared it to be inspired in all its parts. The Catholic Church, therefore, and the Bible stand or fall together. We contend even for the completeness of the Bible, not for a purpose for which it was not given, but for its own designed end.

What we say is, that Protestants have no proof of its completeness, and no means of completing it, if it is deficient. We assert also that they have no competent means of verifying even what they have received from the hands of the Catholic Church. The early Church, which gave us the canon, was in possession of full Apostolic tradition. By this it judged of Scripture. It declared that all that is in Scripture is in harmony with tradition; but it never asserted that Scripture was co-extensive with tradition. It declared the precise contrary.* It never asserted that Scripture could be properly understood without tradition. It never asserted that tradition was ever to yield place to Scripture. Those, then, who have lost tradition, are in no respect on a level with the Christians of the primitive Church.

It will perhaps serve to illustrate these principles if I choose a specimen of the exercise of this verifying faculty, from this very author who is defending it in its new sense. The example is in a matter nearly allied to Ritual. He says, then, that "in the New Testament there is probably but one miracle that is fairly questionable—that of the supposed periodical descent of an angel into the pool of Bethesda." Now let us notice

* *Written* testimonies of this belief of the early Church may be found abundantly in the first volume of "Faith of Catholics" (ed. Waterworth), in articles "Scriptures," "authority," "Apostolic tradition," &c.

why he holds this to be questionable. "This is rejected," he says, "by believing critics on precisely the same grounds as those that have been stated—its want of congruity with other miracles, and its obvious improbability. It is incongruous, because a standing miracle of this sort, wrought, apart from any religious end, in a great city like Jerusalem, is altogether *unlike* anything else recorded. It is improbable, because Josephus, who would only have been too proud to boast of this mark of the divine favour to the Jews, makes no mention of it. The view taken of the matter by many commentators is, that the angel referred to was a messenger from the Temple, who at stated seasons stirred up the blood received there from the sacrifices, and that this was popularly supposed to possess healing virtues."

I will merely remark on the "view taken by commentators," that it refutes the view taken by this author. For if the miracle was not real, yet whence could the "popular supposition" of healing powers arise? It can only be attributed to its *likelihood* in the mind of the people of Jerusalem. If such a miracle were "altogether unlike anything else recorded as happening in a great city like Jerusalem," how came the people of Jerusalem to expect it?

The truth is, that it is only unlike anything that happens in Protestant London. You would not expect to find a multitude of poor cripples waiting for the

stirring of the waters of the New River Head in London ; but you would not be at all astonished at finding a multitude of poor sick people at St Winifrid's Well in North Wales, or St Bridget's Well in West Clare.

The Catholic tradition of holy wells makes this history of St John read very naturally to Catholics ; the Protestant tradition against any such order of miracles makes it read very unnaturally to Protestants. Hence the marvellous view of their commentators when they come on passages like this. Calmet tells us that the Protestants of his day attributed the healing powers of the waters to the sheep that were washed in them ! Now we are told that the Jews attributed it to the stirring up of the blood ! Well might Mr Beecher say, that "the Bible is the most be-trashed book in the world. Coming to it through commentaries is much like looking at a landscape through garret windows, over which generations of unmolested spiders have spun their webs."

We shall see in the next chapter what is the real commentary intended by God for the New Testament. Let me now sum up what has been said.

We have seen that the primitive Church was no mere carrier of the letter of Scripture, but that she is our voucher and guarantee of its authenticity and inspiration. She was the recipient of Scripture, and

in her traditions, in her worship and sacraments, which embody all the great doctrines and facts of Christianity, she had that previous acquaintance with the authors of Scripture which enabled her to collect the scattered fragments; just as a man may gather together the letters of a friend, sorting them out of a heap of other papers, both by his knowledge of the handwriting and by a glance at the contents, which contain allusions which could only have passed between the friend in question and himself.

How different is this conception of the Church from the ignoble caricature of a footman carrying a sealed letter!

And now we can see the force of the inference, that the Church which *thus* received Scripture must be its legitimate interpreter. For, to recur to our illustration of a collection of letters, if we wanted to know their character and their accuracy, and whether they give a full account of the affairs on which they touch, and what is the meaning of the allusions they contain, and what is the solution of certain obscurities which perplex us, to whom should we have recourse but to the man to whom the letters were written, and who verified and collected them? We will now examine whether we can dispense with such help.

CHAPTER XI.

RITUAL A KEY TO SCRIPTURE.

I SHALL endeavour to show in the present chapter that Scripture requires a key; that it was intended by its authors to be read with a key; and that that key was Apostolic tradition.

I shall of course confine my argument to matters of Ritual. Every one must allow that there were some rites both used and instituted by Jesus Christ. I do not think I am hazarding too much in taking for granted that all my readers will admit that Jesus Christ did institute at least two ceremonies—whatever may be their nature—known as Baptism and Communion.

Even the author of "Ecce Homo" admits thus much. "We are to suppose," he says, "that these two sacraments are the most essential; and indeed without them we can scarcely imagine the Church maintaining its distinct existence. Without a solemn form of entrance, and without occasional solemn meetings, Christians would forget that they were Christians. But in these

meetings it was obviously desirable, if it were possible, that not only the fact of the union of Christians, but also the nature and manner of their union, should be symbolically expressed."*

Instead, however, of imitating the example of this author, in making a theory about these two rites, from my own conjectural interpretation, I shall now consider some of the principal passages in which they are mentioned, in order to discover whether such a process of induction as is now applied to the New Testament by every Protestant, was ever contemplated by its authors, or can be used with any good result.

1. We will begin with Baptism.

A careful collation of the four Gospels would convince us that in the Christian religion there was to be some important practice called Baptism ; we should conjecture that it was a ceremony, and an initiatory ceremony into the Christian Church ; but we should be left in doubt and darkness as to its precise nature.

The author just quoted thinks that he can collect from the Gospels alone the purpose and obligation of this rite. He thinks it a ceremony simply borrowed from Judaism, and adapted to Christianity. "It was already," he says, "in use, and had acquired a meaning and associations which were universally understood." What was that meaning? "The water in which they

* "Ecce Homo," p. 173.

were bathed, washed away from them the whole unhallowed and unprofitable past; they rose out of it new men into a new world, and felt as though death were behind them, and they had been born again into a higher state." "Those who would enroll themselves among the citizens 'of the new theocracy' were to understand that they began their life anew, as truly as if they had been born again."*

If Christianity were a proper subject for conjecture, this theory might be plausible. Yet even so, I think it would scarcely satisfy attentive readers of the Gospels. The identity of John's baptism with that of Jesus Christ has not been generally admitted. The primitive Christians ought to have known something on that point; but it is yet to be shown that they looked on the baptism conferred "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as on a level with John's baptism of penance. Those who accept the Acts of the Apostles as at least authentic evidence of primitive belief and practice, will not easily accept this author's conjecture, that the disciples of John were not rebaptized, for the precise contrary is there stated (Acts xix. 2-5).

In spite, then, of this new and rather late accession to theological lore, I think that I may still say that the mere collation of the four Evangelists does not clear up all difficulties.

* "Ecce Homo," p. 85, 87.

All the Evangelists relate that our Lord received baptism from John. John, however, contrasts his baptism of water with the baptism which Jesus should confer "of the Holy Ghost and of fire."

We are perplexed, and we look for an account of this wondrous baptism. The water of John's baptism was figurative, but it was a material reality, not a metaphor. What is the "fire" of the baptism of Jesus? Is it only a figure of speech, or is it the element so called? We find that St Luke and St John do not even allude to the institution of Christian baptism. St Mark barely mentions it in recording the words, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 16). St Matthew is the most explicit. He relates the precept to baptize believers "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But he does not say that these words are to be used, nor does he say whether the ceremony is to be performed with oil, fire, or water.

The necessary conclusion from the examination of these passages is, that it was not the intention of the Evangelists to teach the nature of baptism to their readers, and that they all suppose their readers well instructed on the subject.

The author of "Ecce Homo" says—"Baptism being thus indispensable, we may be surprised to find it so seldom mentioned in the accounts of Christ's life. We

do not read, for example, of the baptism of his principal disciples." He suggests, as a solution to the difficulty, that they had already been baptized by John. The difficulty and the solution are equally imaginary. Indeed, a large proportion of similar Protestant difficulties arise from forgetting that the Gospels were written for Christians, and that we do not generally chronicle matters of familiar, every-day occurrence. Such omissions present no difficulty to Catholics. We know from the living tradition and from the study of ecclesiastical antiquities, as well as from the New Testament, the importance of baptism. But we are not perplexed at finding that its prominence in the Gospel compendiariness is exactly in inverse proportion to its importance. For there could be no necessity to say much on a matter which, for the very reason of its importance, must have been well known to all. Protestants who have isolated themselves from the living Church may require such information; but the readers whom St Matthew addressed did not need to be told of the existence of a sacrament of baptism, of its meaning, necessity, or efficacy. They had all been baptized; they had all seen that sacrament administered probably many times; many of them had administered it themselves; they knew the character of its ceremonies, and were thoroughly instructed in the doctrine concerning it. They knew, of course, that it had been instituted by Jesus

Christ himself. But it was interesting to them to be told the precise occasion on which He promulgated it. Under such circumstances, it was natural for St Matthew to tell them just what he does, and to pass over everything which he would have recorded had he been writing for strangers.

Can any one suppose that our Blessed Lord, neither on the occasion related by St Matthew (c. xxviii. 19), nor on any other occasion, entered into greater detail? The supposition would be absurd.

The explanation which I have given of the reticence of the Gospels is fully borne out by an examination of the remaining books of the New Testament.

Take, for example, the following passage from the Acts of the Apostles:—"Paul came to Ephesus and found certain disciples, and he said to them: Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? But they said to him: We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost. And he said: In what then were you baptized? Who said: In John's baptism. Then Paul said: John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying: That they should believe in Him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus. Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them" (Acts xix. 1-6).

This is certainly a glimpse of a religious system in which Ritual holds no insignificant place. But everything is told by allusions. St Paul's astonishment at the answer of the disciples, and his expressing his astonishment by the question regarding the form of their baptism, are not explained, nor are they supposed to need explanation to St Luke's readers. They had the key to all this in their own baptism. Those who, like Catholics, know that Christian baptism can only be conferred validly in the name of the Blessed Trinity, will understand at once St Paul's question. Those who do not know this, have been puzzled by the phrase "they were baptized in (or into) the name of the Lord Jesus:" and have raised a question whether the invocation of the Blessed Trinity is necessary. The help of tradition would have taught them that the words of St Luke were a *technical* phrase, well known to the first Christians.

We have another example of a similar technical phrase in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The historian, relating the interview between the deacon Philip and the eunuch of Ethiopia, sums up a long conversation in these words: "He preached unto him Jesus." No one to whom Jesus has not been preached in the same way that He was preached by Philip, could possibly know the meaning of this phrase, or how much is contained in the word "Jesus." Had a Catholic

affirmed that it contained any doctrine regarding sacraments, and been unable to adduce direct Scripture proof for his affirmation, his word would probably not only have been questioned, but ridiculed. This, however, is now evident from the context ; for as Philip and the eunuch journey on, the eunuch exclaims, "See, here is water ; what doth hinder me from being baptized ?" Philip, then, in "preaching Jesus," had preached the necessity and nature of baptism. Of course, in this case, Scripture is thus far the key to itself. It is Scripture that tells us that "preaching Jesus" means, among other things, preaching baptism. Yet this only comes out incidentally, and it was not the intention of St Luke to instruct his readers, by means of this circumstance, in the meaning of the word "Jesus." "To preach Jesus" was evidently a technical phrase, of which the meaning was well known to those for whom St Luke wrote. How much more does it imply besides baptism ? This is a question which could never be answered from Scripture alone,—which can never be answered at all unless we have the key which those first disciples possessed.

But if the nature of baptism cannot be gathered with certainty even from the historical books of the New Testament ; if the authors of those historical books had no such design as to teach their readers the external form, the meaning, the obligation of baptism ; one can

scarcely expect to find these things in the other writings of the Apostles. The silence of the Epistles regarding matters of Christian worship in general is insisted on by some as a strong argument against Ritualism. But nothing can be more fallacious than negative arguments; especially arguments drawn from omissions in epistolary correspondence. The assumption, that all necessary religious truth must be found somewhere in the New Testament makes many persons slow to admit the full force of this principle. I would therefore ask a candid and impartial attention to the judgment of Locke regarding the Epistles. In his "Reasonableness of Christianity" he admits that it would be wrong to look in them even for an exposition of Christian faith. He puts the matter so clearly, and in a way so apposite to my present subject, that I shall transcribe his words. "The Epistles," he says, "were writ to those who were in the faith and true Christians already; and so could not be designed to teach them the fundamental articles and points necessary to salvation. . . . And they were writ upon particular occasions, and without those occasions had not been writ; and so cannot be thought necessary to salvation; though they, resolving doubts and reforming mistakes, are of great advantage to our knowledge and practice. I do not deny but the great doctrines of the Christian faith are dropped here and there, and scattered up and down in most

of them." * Yet this was not their express purpose.

In the preface to his paraphrase of St Paul's Epistles, he speaks still more to the purpose. "The nature of epistolary writings in general disposes the writer to pass by the mentioning of many things, as well known to him to whom his letter is addressed, which are necessary to be laid open to a stranger, to make him comprehend what is said; and it not seldom falls out that a well-penned letter, which is very easy and intelligible to the receiver, is very obscure to a stranger, who hardly knows what to make of it. The matters that St Paul wrote about were certainly things well known to those he writ to, and which they had some peculiar concern in, which made them easily apprehend his meaning, and see the tendency and force of his discourse. But we having now, at this distance, no information of the occasion of his writing, little or no knowledge of the temper and circumstances those he writ to were in, but what is to be gathered out of the Epistles themselves; it is not strange that many things in them lie concealed to us, which, no doubt, they who were concerned in the letter, understood at first sight."

Now if this is the case even with regard to points

* "Reasonableness of Christianity," Locke's Works, vol. vii., p. 152-4. Ed. 1823.

of faith, which are, directly or indirectly, the subject-matter of these letters, how much more will it be true of those rites which were not in any way the scope of the Epistles? "You may read Epistle after Epistle of St Paul," says Dr Vaughan, "and not find a word touching upon anything of a Ritual nature. It should be remembered," he adds, thinking to give additional force to his argument, "that the Epistles of St Peter, and in fact nearly all the other Epistles, are completely silent touching the worship of the early churches."

The conclusion he would draw from this is, that in those days Ritual had but little significance. As if it would not be easy to make a collection of thousands of letters of the Popes in which there is not even a distant allusion to Ritual! The only conclusion that can fairly be drawn from the fact that the Epistles seldom, directly or even indirectly, treat of Ritual, is, that the Christians to whom they were written were well instructed in such matters of daily life, and therefore required few admonitions; and that in consequence it is not to the Epistles we must look for information regarding subjects on which they hardly touch.

But let us remember that we are in search now for information regarding a sacrament which even the most anti-ritualistic Protestants acknowledge to

be of divine institution and of perpetual and universal obligation. If the Protestant theory of the sufficiency of Scripture be correct, we *ought* to find all necessary information in the New Testament regarding this sacrament at least.

We have sought in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles. We have found that they do not give the information we seek, but suppose their readers to be already in possession of it. Do the Epistles supply the deficiency?

We have certainly in them many allusions to Christian baptism.

We are told that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 5), which shows the importance of the rite, but not its nature. The Corinthians are reminded, "in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles," &c. (1 Cor. xii. 13), which is an appeal to their knowledge of a fact personal to themselves, regarding which they were consequently well informed, but which conveys little information to those who have not a similar experience. There are passages where more doctrinal teaching is conveyed, but it is only by allusion to what was already known. Such, for example, is the exhortation to the Colossians: "As therefore you have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in Him . . . Buried with Him in baptism, in whom also

you are risen again," &c. (Col. ii. 6, 12). The Apostle is not giving the instruction we seek, but referring to instruction already received orally. Or again in the Epistle to the Romans: "*Know you not* that all we that are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in His death," &c. (Rom. vi. 3). This, with the words that follow, is the most explicit teaching regarding the nature of baptism in the Epistles; yet it is still an allusion to knowledge possessed previously; and clear as it must have been to those to whom the letter was written, it has been interpreted in the most contradictory manners by men who persist in reading Scripture without its key. I need say nothing of such passages as that of St Paul to the Corinthians: "What shall they do that are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not again at all?" (1 Cor. xv. 29,) because it is evident that the allusion was quite clear to the Corinthians, and it is acknowledged that it is quite obscure to us.

But I observe regarding all these passages, and any others that remain which I have not quoted, that they give but very scanty information as to the external form of the sacrament.

From this review we may draw some important conclusions.

a. Neither St Matthew when he wrote his Gospel, nor St Luke when he wrote his history of the Apostles,

nor the Apostles when they wrote their letters, had any design that their respective readers should gather for themselves either the doctrine of baptism or the form of administering it. Why indeed teach them what they knew already?

b. If it was not intended that such information should be gathered from any one of these writings, taken alone, much less was it intended by their authors that it should be obtained by a collation of them all.

Such a collation was impossible until a collection of the various writings had been made, and their authority settled; and as this was not done till many years after the death of the writers, Christians for several generations would have been without an accurate knowledge of a rite which each and all of these documents allude to as of the utmost importance.

c. It seems now to be maintained by Protestants that, though it never entered into the design of the authors, singly or collectively, to inform the Church by their writings of what she ought to know regarding baptism, yet the Holy Ghost so overruled their minds and pens, that the collected writings do now supply her with that rule of faith and practice which the Apostolic Church had in oral tradition—that, though each writer, taken alone, is obscure, yet one supplies what is wanting in another, and one clears up what in another is doubtful.

Now I admit the overruling Providence of God in the formation of the New Testament, for it is a Catholic tradition; but I altogether deny this supposed Providence which makes the collected Scriptures into a perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice, because Catholic tradition rejects it, and Scripture itself supplies no evidence of it. If Protestants want us to believe that we are to gather our information about baptism by collating all the books of the New Testament, let them begin by proving that, without the help of tradition, *any* satisfactory information can be gathered from those books. They will then have to prove, in the second place, that the original mode of transmitting revelation, instituted by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, was afterwards to be set aside in favour of this new one, which is of an utterly different nature. Until they have proved these two points, the theory or assumption—for it is nothing else—of the sufficiency of Scripture is not even plausible.

2. We will now examine whether the New Testament gives us more complete information regarding the other rite which Protestants accept than it does regarding baptism. They call it "The Lord's Supper." It matters not to inquire whether this expression is used in Scripture of the Communion instituted by Jesus Christ, or only of those love-feasts observed by the first Christians in connexion with the Holy Communion,

or whether, as some appear to think, these are one and the same rite. But call it what we may—Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, Blessed Sacrament, Holy Mass with Catholics, or Lord's Supper with Protestants—in what way did its Institutor, Jesus Christ, intend that His disciples in future ages should learn its nature and its manner of administration?

From an accurate and critical collation of all the texts concerning it in the various books of the New Testament—such is the Protestant answer.

But can such an answer be seriously maintained?

This was evidently not the primitive method, for such a collation was of course impossible until the various books of the New Testament had been sifted, their authority settled, and the canon drawn up. No one will maintain that for so many generations Christians were without the means of celebrating correctly one of the principal rites of Christ's institution.

But perhaps it will be said that this method of learning our Lord's will was only intended for later ages.

Now there is not a trace, in any one of the books of the New Testament, of any design on the part of their authors to teach men how to celebrate the Lord's Supper, or to explain its meaning to those who are in ignorance.

St John says not one word about its institution. St

Matthew and St Mark record our Lord's own act, but they say nothing from which their readers could conjecture that the ceremony which Jesus Christ then performed was to be an institution among Christians. They do not record the words: "This do for a commemoration of me." They give neither command, counsel, nor even permission to repeat the action.

And no man who read those Gospels alone, without any other knowledge on the subject, could have gathered in any way that there was to be a Christian rite called the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion. The recipients therefore of those Gospels, had they not possessed tradition, far from seeking more full and detailed information, would not have seen any need whatever to concern themselves about it.

Those to whom St Luke's Gospel came would indeed have discovered that their Master, after breaking the bread, and saying, "This is my body," added, "Do this for a commemoration of Me." They would therefore have studied attentively his account of the rite, in order to know how to perform it. They would probably have noticed that St Luke, in speaking of the cup, does not renew the injunction. They might therefore not unnaturally have supposed that this was no part of the future rite. Perhaps at some later period of their life the Epistles of St Paul to the Corinthians might have fallen into their hands,

and then they would have discovered their mistake, since he tells us—what no Evangelist records—that Jesus Christ commanded the cup also to be used in the commemoration.

But did no one know this until he wrote his Epistle, about twenty-four years after our Lord's ascension?

Certainly he did not write with the intention of making it known; for he says that he had delivered to them the doctrine orally before; and the reason why he again recalls the institution is, not that they may learn to celebrate correctly, nor to teach them the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, but it is that from that doctrine, *already perfectly well known to his readers*, he may urge upon them certain moral conclusions; first, as to the eating of meats offered to idols (in the tenth chapter), and then as to the abuse of the love-feasts (in the eleventh chapter); and for these reasons he introduces the mention of this rite by these words: "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say" (c. x. 15), *i.e.*, you are well instructed, reflect then on the truths of faith, consult your own reason, your own consciences, and see if my conclusions are not just.

St Paul, as the Anglican Brett has correctly observed, does not write to inform his readers what is necessary for the consecration of the Eucharist. "It is an instruction to them to consider what is administered to them, and how they ought to receive it, but does not appear

to be any direction to the ministrator how or in what manner he was to consecrate the elements, or with what words he was to bless, eucharistize, or give thanks, over them. He plainly supposes that the administrators of the Eucharist had rightly performed their parts (bating their not excluding the ignorant and unworthy from partaking the divine mysteries); otherwise he would not have instructed the communicants only, but the administrators also. Neither would he have told the communicants that they received the Lord's body, though they did not discern it, if what had been given to them had not been consecrated in such a manner as to be made the Lord's body, in such a sense as Christ intended it should be understood to be so. Neither does St Paul say what liquor was to be in the cup, which would have been necessary, if he had intended to direct the minister of this sacrament what he was to say and do on this occasion." *

I may here, therefore, repeat the question I asked about Baptism. Since not one of the writers of the New Testament wrote with any design of teaching men how to celebrate this great Christian rite, since they all suppose their readers well instructed in both the practice and the doctrine, what grounds have Protestants for their persuasion that, without the tradition which the sacred writers presuppose, they can attain, by a

* Brett—"Dissertation on the Liturgies."

general and critical collation of all these writers, to an accurate knowledge of what not one of them intended to teach?

3. The two rites we have been considering were merely chosen by way of illustration of a principle. I do not assert that they are more obscurely described than other rites. And that other rites are mentioned in the New Testament is quite as clear as that these two are there to be found. The question, therefore, immediately suggests itself, Do the Holy Scriptures without tradition tell us anything about the relative importance of the various parts of Ritual? It is as necessary to know the importance of a rite as its nature and external form.

Protestants seem to think that on this subject the New Testament speaks clearly. The author of "Ecce Homo," for instance, though he appears to agree with Goethe that Protestants have too few sacraments, yet speaks of it as a *fact* that Christ only instituted two. He has professed to leave all tradition behind him; yet I am convinced that he never derived this supposed fact from the Gospels, but received it from Protestant tradition.

It is not my wish to suggest a new heresy to any lover of novelties, yet I will state my own conviction that a perfectly impartial, unprejudiced reader, confining himself strictly to the New Testament, would

select neither Baptism nor Holy Communion, but the "washing of feet," as the principal rite or sacrament of Christian observance; and the keeping of the Sabbath as the rite most rigorously prohibited by the Christian law.

He would find that the institution of the washing of feet is related in the most circumstantial detail. It is performed in a very striking and emphatic manner by Jesus Christ, on the very eve of His death. He seems to make it essential to fellowship with Himself. "If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me," (John xiii. 8). He seems to impose a formal precept of its repetition. "You ought also to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you so you do also" (ib. v. 14, 15). He seems to insinuate some mysterious meaning or virtue in it beyond what lies on the surface: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (v. 7). Any one considering these things with a mind unprepossessed, would assuredly assign to this rite an important place, if not the very first place among the observances of Christianity.

With regard to the keeping of the Sabbath, he might notice that it held a conspicuous rank among Jewish traditions at the time of our Blessed Lord. But he would see that the Divine Founder of Christian society never once alluded to it as belonging to His

followers. He never reproached the Jews, or any class among them, for its neglect; though both by word and example he reproved them for the mistaken rigour with which they interpreted the ancient precept. The Apostles too never once mention the "Observance of the Sabbath" among Christian virtues. It finds no place in any of their exhortations. The only certain allusion to it seems to be in a passage where the Apostle says: "How turn you again to the weak and needy elements which you desire to serve again? You observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you" (Gal. iv. 9-11), and a similar passage (Col. ii. 16). He would conclude, therefore, that this observance was rigorously forbidden to Christians.

Some of my readers may not agree with me that any one would form this estimate of Christian Ritual from Scripture alone. I will not contend for what I have advanced only as a conjecture. Yet I think an impartial mind will admit, that, in any case, it was not from Scripture *alone* that Protestants derived their neglect of the ceremony performed by our Blessed Lord so impressively, and their scorn and ridicule when they see it still observed by Catholics, as, for example, by the Pope on Holy Thursday. Again it was not from Scripture alone that Protestants derived their estimate of the Christian obligation of "the Sabbath."

If I be asked, how it is that Catholics place the washing of feet only in a secondary rank, and do not class it among the Sacraments, strictly so called ; and again how it is that they do lay a great stress on the observance of the first day of the week, and of other days as holidays ; I reply that they have learned these things from tradition.

The words which our Blessed Lord spoke to St Peter after washing his feet : " What I do thou knowest not now, *but thou shalt know hereafter*" (John xiii. 7) point to a subsequent and supplemental information which was to be the key to what is recorded in Scripture. We believe that that key was given to St Peter and to the Apostles, and by them traditionally given to the Churches which they founded.

The investigation we have been pursuing brings us to the conclusion that, with regard to Ritual at least, the New Testament requires a key, that that key was intended to be the Apostolic tradition possessed by those to whom the books of the New Testament were originally written. This tradition was not merely a doctrine orally handed down, but it was the Ritual itself received from the Apostles, and alluded to in the New Testament, though not derived from it. This Ritual must have embodied doctrines as well as facts. If men were baptized into the name of Jesus they must have known who Jesus was ; if they were bap-

tized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they must have known the signification of those three words; they must have known certain doctrines regarding the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which St Paul speaks of as symbolised by Baptism. They must have known the nature of the Church into which Baptism had introduced them, the kind of authority claimed by those who had baptised them, in a word the whole truth and discipline of Christ in its elementary and essential facts. Those who had learned from Apostolic lips how to celebrate or how to receive worthily the Body and Blood of Christ, knew well what was meant by those words. They needed no critical conjectures and collation of texts to inform them whether that Rite was a sacrifice or a sacrament, or both or neither.

In a word, they possessed in the doctrines they had been taught, and in the familiar Ritual with which those doctrines were intimately connected, a living and full tradition, by means of which they were either able to dispense with Scripture altogether, if they had it not, or to use or interpret aright those portions they possessed.

CHAPTER XII.

PICKING THE LOCK.

THE argument we pursued in the last chapter was no very abstruse one. It needed no great shrewdness, no practised critical powers, no erudition to discover, that the New Testament was written for men who were already in possession of a knowledge and an experience which must have served them as a key to its meaning. It needed but our own experience of the difficulty of ascertaining the precise meaning of those passages which refer to the most fundamental doctrines, or the most familiar practices of the Apostolic Church, to convince us that without a key we could not succeed in opening the Gospels and possessing ourselves of their treasures.

I have been astonished, therefore, at finding learned and acute men maintain, that the New Testament needs no other key than such as we should employ in interpreting Plato or Thucydides,—that is, a critical knowledge of the language, and a certain familiarity

with the political, philosophical, or social circumstances under which the authors wrote.

This is indeed to some extent true, if by familiarity with circumstances we understand those of the Christian Church ; but this would be equivalent to interpreting the Christian Scriptures by Christian traditions ; and this is not what is meant by those to whom I refer. They repudiate such tradition, and regard it as the main source of erroneous interpretations. The knowledge by which they think to attain to the real sense of the Gospels is familiarity with the state of the Roman or Jewish society, at the time Christianity made its appearance, not that of the Christian society which resulted from the Apostles' preaching.

"The question really demanding a settlement is this," says a recent author, "Whether the rules and gifts which qualify a man for the right understanding of ordinary written language are, or are not, sufficient for rightly understanding the Bible?" He maintains that they are ; and that "the interpretation, which, in spite of all ecclesiastical opposition, ought to be adopted as the only true one, is unquestionably that which has in modern times been styled the *Historico-Grammatical*."*

This writer supposes that the only reason why any one contests this method of interpretation is, that the

* "*Liber Librorum*," p. 166.

Bible having been written under the direct guidance of the Holy Ghost, is not to be measured by common rules. To this he replies, "Surely it will be allowed that if God has deemed it desirable to reveal His will to mankind by means of intelligible books, He must have intended that the contents of those books should be discovered in accordance with those general laws which are conducive to the right understanding of documents in general. For if this were not the case, He would have chosen insufficient and even contradictory means inadequate to the purpose He had in view, which cannot be supposed."

Let us waive the question of inspiration altogether, and examine this reasoning. It is founded on an utterly false supposition. No doubt, certainly, can be entertained, but that the Bible must be intelligible when used as it was intended to be used. If, therefore, it was intended by God that, in all ages, it should be put into the hands of all the simple and unlearned who might be able to read, that each one might study it for himself and gather from it his religious belief and rule of life, then God would have made it intelligible to such simple and unlearned readers.

As I do not know that the author would maintain this, and as I cannot imagine any probable arguments for such a supposition, I shall not here discuss it. I

quoted in the last chapter what Locke said of the difficulty of gathering the true meaning of the Epistles ; I will merely add what the author of the "Ecce Homo" says of the capacity required for an independent investigation of the Gospels. " Only a well-trained historical imagination, he says, active and yet calm, is competent so to revive the circumstances of place and time in which the words (of Jesus Christ) were spoken, as to draw from them, at a distance of eighteen hundred years, a meaning *tolerably like* that which they conveyed to those who heard them."

If this be true, the New Testament was certainly not designed as the great source or channel of revelation to the mass of mankind.

But I suppose that the writer whose position I am examining did not mean that the sense of the Bible could be attained without the help of learning.

It might perhaps be urged that, granting what Locke says of the difficulty of interpreting the Epistles, yet such difficulties are not insuperable to the learned. What is there, then, in the Bible so different from other ancient books cast in the same form of histories or epistles, that we should adopt a different mode of interpretation in one case and in the other ?

This is an argument that deserves a careful consideration.

I grant, then, that if there were nothing in the New

Testament peculiar to itself, this argument might hold. We will see presently how the case stands. But I object to the mode of reasoning sometimes adopted on this question. It is said (as by the author I have quoted), *since* God intended us to learn His will by the study of the Bible, it must be intelligible to us if we study it. Here is an assumption of God's intention, which is greatly controverted, as if it were something known and acknowledged by all. Such an argument can have no force, at least with a Catholic. Would it not have been safer to reason from matters of experience? Now, the intelligibility of Scripture by means of study (without tradition) is a question of fact, which should be the basis, not the conclusion, of a syllogism.

An argument in order to be of any value ought to be rather made thus: Intelligent study can attain to the right meaning of the New Testament; therefore God meant that His will should be learnt from the New Testament by study. But what Protestant will venture to reason as I have proposed? Who will undertake to prove that candid and intelligent men do, as a matter of experience, attain to such a generally accurate and universally admitted interpretation of the facts and doctrines of the New Testament as they do, for example, of the life and opinions of Cicero? I will try to point out the reason presently. I now merely assert the undeniable fact that learned men, candid men, men eager

for truth, men who spend their whole lives in the study of the New Testament in quest of truth, come to utterly different conclusions as to the most fundamental doctrines and practices of the Christian religion. I have no wish here to exaggerate. It is even impossible to exaggerate. The divergences and contradictions are too notorious to be either denied or palliated. What pretext, then, is there for supposing that the documents of the New Testament are to be interpreted just like all other documents? Is there any similar diversity with regard to other documents? If it were no more difficult to ascertain the meaning of the Gospels than it is to interpret the Roman historians; if the sense of St Paul's Epistles could be ascertained by the same means by which we read and understand the epistles of Cicero; then no history ought to be more generally admitted than that of Christianity, no facts of antiquity ought to be so universally agreed upon by the learned as the opinions and acts of St Paul: for certainly more patient labour has been spent on the study of the Bible than on that of all other ancient documents put together. But is there any such unanimity amongst learned men? Are we gradually approaching to it? Does not almost each year bring out some new attempt to re-construct Christianity out of Scripture? From the day when Locke "betook himself to the sole reading of the Scriptures for the understanding of the Christian religion" to the

day when the author of "Ecce Homo" "reconsidered the whole subject from the beginning," was there any progress by this method? Or is the last effort any more likely than its predecessor to satisfy and unite men's minds? Surely these are not captious questions. I wish to put the matter on a broad basis. Three hundred years and more of Protestantism have been devoted to the study of the Bible without tradition. There has been no lack of learning nor of earnestness. If at the end of that time there is even more diversity than at the beginning, it is not rash to conclude that the experiment has failed, and that truth is unattainable by this means.

No one will maintain that the differences are accidental or unimportant. I will choose, for example, the two rites we discussed in the last chapter.

1. Baptism is generally acknowledged to be the initiatory ceremony into Christian society. The only mention of this rite as belonging to Christ's followers in St Mark's Gospel is in these words:—"He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved." It cannot be deemed unimportant or unessential to know the meaning of these words. The sentence contains three terms to be interpreted,—What is meant by "believes"? what by being "baptized"? what by "saved"?

First, what is meant by "believes"? What is belief? What are the truths to be believed? The answer of

many is, that belief is a firm and supernatural assent to God's revelation, known to be His revelation, for the sake of God's veracity. The object of belief is the whole revelation, at least implicitly; and explicitly so much of it as is proposed to the individual believer by the Church, which is the channel to him of revelation.

The answer of the author of "*Ecce Homo*" is, that faith is an instinctive loyalty to goodness when it is impressively presented to the soul, consequently a loyalty to Christ: but that this can co-exist with the utmost diversity of theologic opinions; that a man may be a Christian without a full and firm belief in Christ's theology; indeed that faith, which is a loyal and free confidence in Christ, even if possessed in the least degree, must assure us that Christ cannot expect us to grasp His theology at once.*

Here are certainly two very different views of this word *believes*; and between these two, or in opposition to them both, how many other interpretations might be counted.

Is there any more union with regard to the second word of St Mark's sentence—" *is baptized* " ?

By baptism many understand a ceremony essentially Christian, and entirely supernatural. They believe that it can only be administered with a certain form of words, and with a certain application of the element

* "*Ecce Homo*," p. 79.

of water. They believe it to have the efficacy, not merely of signifying, but of effecting forgiveness of sins ; not merely of pledging, but of conveying a new life to the soul.

The author of "Ecce Homo" believes it to be identical with John's baptism ; of course, therefore, he does not require the invocation of the Blessed Trinity, in which I suppose he does not believe, at least in the Catholic sense. And he certainly attributes no such effects to baptism as those which I have mentioned.

Yet, besides his opinion, how many more are entertained by other students of the Bible !

Thirdly, with regard to the word "*saved*," there is perhaps a still greater diversity.

Many understand saved from eternal punishment in hell, saved from the eternal loss of God.

The author of "Ecce Homo" understands, as it appears, saved from the calamities impending over the nation, saved from the "wrath to come" by the desolation of the Roman legions, or from some evil at least with which God visits his rebellious subjects in this life.*

Now here, after more than three hundred years devoted to the eager study of Christ's words and system of religion, is the result of that study. A Catholic sees these facts, and confirms his belief in the old

* This I gather from p. 4. and p. 21.

traditional method by this reasoning. He says—Where there is no unity, there cannot be truth. But unity is proved to fly farther and farther from these learned students who discard tradition. Therefore, God, who is the author of truth and unity, not of error and discord, never intended His written word to be thus treated. He never intended it to convey the knowledge of His will to those who have forsaken unity and broken charity. He gave the New Testament, a shrine containing an inestimable treasure, and he gave the key of tradition wherewith to unlock it; but He will not suffer the *lock to be picked*, and the treasure to be possessed by those who reject the key.

The example I have just taken was Baptism, the rite that admits men to Christian society. If the Bible is the sole source of revelation; if the Bible interpreted without tradition leads to such opposite views regarding Baptism, its condition and its effects; what kind of society will that be to which men are admitted by a ceremony so strangely and diversely interpreted? Not unity certainly, but discord and anarchy will be its main characteristics.

2. Yet in this society there is a sacrament of unity. Thus far all are agreed, that there is a ceremony instituted by Christ to typify the union of His followers. "The union of mankind," says the author of "Ecce Homo," "but a union begun and subsisting only in

Christ, is what the Lord's Supper sacramentally expresses."

Now, according to Protestant principles, we must learn to know the meaning and practice of this by independent investigation of the Bible. What will be the result? I will quote a passage from Locke in answer, for he certainly reasons logically from his principles and admits the result candidly.

"Every Christian," says Locke, "is to partake of that bread and that cup which is the communion of the body and blood of Christ. And is not every sincere Christian indispensably obliged to endeavour to understand these words of our Saviour's institution? 'This is my body, and this is my blood!' And if, upon his serious endeavour to do it, he understands them in a literal sense, that Christ meant that that was really His body and blood, and nothing else, must he not necessarily believe that the bread and wine, in the Lord's Supper is changed really into His body and blood, though he doth not know how? Or if, having his mind set otherwise, he understands the bread and wine to be really the body and blood of Christ, without ceasing to be the true bread and wine; or else, if he understands them that the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed given and received, in the Sacrament, in a spiritual manner; or lastly, if he understands our Saviour to mean, by those

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words, the bread and wine to be only a representation of His body and blood ;—in which way soever of these four a Christian understands these words of our Saviour to be meant by Him, is he not obliged in that sense to believe them to be true, and assent to them? Or, can he be a Christian, and understand these words to be meant by our Saviour in one sense, and deny his assent to them as true in that sense? Would not this be to deny our Saviour's veracity, and consequently His being the Messiah sent from God?"

If this example had been meant as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Protestant principle of private judgment, it could not have been better chosen. And so our Blessed Lord could not make His Apostles understand in what sense He gave His body and blood! Or the Apostles, if they knew it, could not transmit their knowledge to their disciples! And in the seventeenth century of Christianity, while every Christian is bound to acknowledge Jesus Christ for his Deliverer from error, and therefore to use his best endeavours to ascertain his Teacher's meaning; yet, since men's minds are "set differently," and books like those of Scripture give wide scope for error, and the truth itself is of an order in which men may easily mistake, the most contradictory opinions and interpretations are inevitable! Yet, since these contradictions do not arise from despising the Master's Word, but from sincere and earnest

endeavours to conform the mind to it, those who hold such various opinions are equally good Christians. Indeed, they are all *one* in their belief that Christ came to deliver them from error; and in order to testify their oneness, they must eat and drink that sacrament of unity which is to them one of the main causes of diversity.

Locke, indeed, goes farther than I have yet stated. He maintains that the *one* point on which Christians are bound to agree, the one article of the faith that justifies, is, that Christ is the Deliverer or Messiah. Whoever admits this is a Christian and acceptable to God; on condition that he wishes to submit to this King, learn His Will, and obey His Law. But the Will and the Law must be learned by independent study of Scripture. If that study leads him to the conclusion that his Deliverer was God the Son, the second Person in a Trinity, he must accept it, and consequently worship Him as such. If, on the contrary, his study convinces him that the expression "Son of God" has no such meaning, and that his Deliverer is only the first of prophets, he is bound to be faithful to his conviction. Yet these two are equally good and loyal Christians. It is loyalty to their Master, and to His Word, that makes them differ. And to testify their loyalty they must eat the sacrament of unity.

Thus the author of the "Essay on the Human

Understanding" set out in quest of the true Christian religion, and such was the result for which he has chosen the title of "The Reasonableness of Christianity!" He would have laughed at the legendary knight-errants who went in search of the Sangraal, and would have considered it a fool's errand. Yet, was his own more wise? The result of his long and painful journeys through Scripture is the conviction that Jesus Christ intended that the disciple who worships Him as his God, and bows down in adoration before Him as personally present beneath the veils of bread and wine, should do this as a sign of unity with the disciple who looks on bread and wine as a natural representation of fellowship with a mere prophet! After this, we can with difficulty believe him serious when he says in the preface to this treatise: "The little satisfaction and consistency that is to be found in most of the systems of divinity I have met with, made me betake myself to the sole reading of the Scriptures for the understanding the Christian religion. What from thence, by an attentive and unbiassed search I have received, reader, I have delivered to thee."

I have selected this example, not because of any eccentric opinions of Locke (for he does not state his own opinions on either of these points—the person of Christ, or the nature of His Supper), but because Locke, with a rare candour, prefers to vindicate for

each man the right of private judgment rather than to convince others of the fruits of his own private judgment.

I have selected him also because the system of religion he deduces from Scripture, strange as it is, is not the result of any want of ability or learning, but the logical consequence of the first principle, "the right of unbiassed search."

Catholics are often exposed to hear themselves called enemies of light and progress; and they are now and then a little piqued when they hear their Protestant neighbours speak and write as if they enjoyed a monopoly of reason; but they will console themselves when they see what an *ignis fatuus* this boasted light of reason proves to be when exerted on Christian books outside that Christian society for which those books were written.

I have now only to point out the intrinsic reason which explains the singular characteristic of the New Testament, that it cannot be read intelligibly without a key.

The explanation doubtless is, that the New Testament, having been written for men well instructed, naturally omits whatever it was superfluous to say to such men, and that there is in this case absolutely no other means of supplying those omissions but Christian tradition.

When we examine a history, the first question to be settled is, whether it was written for men previously ignorant of the facts it professes to narrate, or conversant with them: for to read a history correctly, we must read it with the eyes of those for whom it was written. If we find that they were in ignorance of the facts narrated, we shall expect to find a full and precise information in the history. Our only preparation in such a case will be acquaintance with the language and with the tone of thought of the readers. If we can succeed in attaining this, we shall read as they read, and obtain the same amount of information which they obtained—that is, a full and precise knowledge of the matter of the history. If, on the contrary, we find that the original readers were conversant with the facts, we shall expect to find the writer passing over many things of importance, dwelling on more recondite details, and dealing in hints and allusions.

In such a case we may or may not be able to put ourselves in the place of the first readers; that is, we may or may not be able to attain their previous knowledge, and so to read as they read. If some particular history we are examining is of this supplementary structure, we cannot seek from it alone the necessary information; but there may be many other histories or channels by which to supply deficiencies; or the subject-matter may be such that our familiarity with similar

events may enable us to make many probable conjectures.

Is this the case with the New Testament? It was certainly written for well-informed readers, conversant with the events it relates. It therefore naturally omits much that would have been set down had it been written to instruct the ignorant. It probably omits the most familiar points, which in this case would be the fundamental doctrines and daily practices. Can we supply this information? By Christian tradition we certainly may. But without it there is no means whatever of doing this. The Gospels contain the only detailed record, besides tradition, of the origin of Christianity. We can throw little light on their obscurities from conjecture; for in the whole history of the world there are no similar circumstances to give us any clue; and God's ways are too mysterious for us to attempt to measure them by our own reasonings.

Hence it is that if we reject the only key which God has provided, we may try to pick the lock, but it will probably resist all our efforts.

I will say, in conclusion, that we need not be surprised at this peculiar structure of the New Testament. If Jesus Christ came on earth to establish a Church; if He wished that the members of that Church should be known to be His disciples by their union; then He would take the means to secure this union. Such means we

find by experience to be a common faith delivered by a living authority, and the bonds of the same worship and sacraments. And we find, in fact, neither in the written nor in traditional records of our Lord's life, any other means appointed by Himself. The living Church is ever acting on the commission she received from Him previously to the recording of it in the Gospels. "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them." Tradition and Ritual are the great features of her charter. The Scriptures she has received as a help to tradition. In her hands alone are they intelligible and consistent.

But He who inspired them for the use of His Church has taken precautions to prevent His truth from falling into the hands of those who abandon unity. He has inspired, not indeed a riddle, but a document which requires a key; and has intended that the vain efforts of talent and learning to dispense with the Church and yet retain truth, should convince us still more of the value that He sets on humility and charity—that is, on submission to and communion with His Church.

CHAPTER XIII.

"CIRCUMSPICE."

WHEN St John had completed his supplemental Gospel, he wrote these words : "There are also many other things which Jesus did : which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25).

The American Protestant minister, Beecher, has made the following reflection on this saying of the Apostle : "These words," he says, "affect me more profoundly than when I think of the destruction of the Alexandrian Library, or the perishing of Grecian art in Athens or Byzantium. . . . The leaving out of these things from the New Testament, though divinely wise, seems, to my yearning, not so much the unaccomplishment of noble things, as the destruction of great treasures, which had already had oral life, but failed of incarnation in literature."

This is certainly a most true and natural thought, and may be shared by all to some extent. But a Catholic will know that there are words of Jesus Christ, not

written in the New Testament, yet not therefore lost ; for they were incarnate in a tradition which subsists to this day, and will subsist while the world lasts.

Shall I be asked where they are recorded, or who can repeat them, and prove them to be His? I will reply, as the epitaph to Sir Christopher Wren, in St Paul's Cathedral, *Si monumentum quæris circumspice*. Look round you at the Catholic Church, which is His building. Look well at her institutions, her government, her worship, her ritual, and you will know some of those words of Jesus Christ, of which He said : "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

There are other means of knowing what a man has said besides hearing and reading. We may see what he said in the effects of his words.

"What was the architect of that Cathedral talking about all those hours that he was closeted with the builder?" "I know not," you say, "I did not overhear, and I have no record of his conversations." "Indeed, but you have a most certain record. There rises the Cathedral before your eyes. Look up at its mighty towers, examine the tracery of its windows, go round it, and admire all its details, and then you will know what the architect was busy about. 'If you wish for a record of his labours, as well as a monument of his talent, look round you.'"

St Luke tells us that "for forty days, after His resurrection, Jesus Christ appeared to His Apostles, and spoke to them of the kingdom of God" (Acts i.)

You would wish to know what words He spoke to those minds at length prepared to hear. You seek for them in vain in Gospels or Epistles. Were they then spoken in the air? Did the breeze convey them away? If so, why were they spoken? They were spoken to the builders of the Church by the great Architect, who said: "On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"He spoke of the kingdom of God." He drew up the chart of its constitution; He laid down its fundamental laws. Become a citizen of that kingdom, and you will not only know but enjoy the word spoken by its King.

This is the Catholic plan; it is that also of reason and of Scripture. But others will not adopt it. There are many like those we have seen in former chapters. They say: "I like not that building, though I venerate the architect. That building, indeed, bears his name, and immemorial tradition has ascribed it to him. But I believe he is not responsible for it. The builders departed from his plan, and spoilt his work. See! here I have an unfinished ground-plan which is certainly his, and I have also an imperfect journal of his life. I have, therefore, put the building completely from my thoughts;

I have sat down to a careful examination of these documents, and they have convinced me more than ever that the architect's intention has not hitherto been understood. He intended to build something far simpler. But the workmen he employed were dissatisfied with his design, and substituted their own ornate and monstrous projects in its place. Let us demolish this building, for it is unworthy of him ; and then let us exercise our ingenuity on his plans, and build up a better church, such as he intended." So they talk ; but while each has his own private judgment about the architect's plan, and they cannot agree even in the outlines, they reconstruct nothing.

There is a second class of men who acknowledge that the builders worked according to the instructions they received. But they do not like the building as it now stands. Much has been added to it, they say, by later hands. It needs not to be demolished, but renovated. And to know how the restoration must be made, they go back to history, and they look to old drawings, and consult old descriptions. But neither are *they* agreed. Some would reform it back to what it was at one period ; others prefer a later or an earlier stage ; and respecting no one period are they united. For the accounts are so many, and they are so difficult to reconcile, that they are ever furnishing new matter of doubt.

Besides, all the accounts have some very troublesome omissions. It seems there was an agreement among the builders to speak very cautiously, and in very obscure terms, and such as could only be comprehended by the initiated, about certain parts of the building. This was called the "Discipline of the Secret," and it is a sore puzzle to our antiquarian reformers.

But what hinders them altogether from agreement is their peculiar way of studying. Since the present Cathedral is before their eyes, it would be but natural to look at it, and by means of it to explain both the plan of the founder and the obscure allusions in the ancient records. But no! this might compel them to admit that the building has simply grown into what it was intended to be, and thus they could exercise no private judgment and attempt no reform. So they hold the architect's plan in one hand, and the descriptions of some old builder or observer in the other, and they compare, and conjecture, and cry, "I have found it," to one another; but the other too has made his discovery; and they compare their discoveries, and they do not agree; and so they go back to make fresh conjectures.

And yet the Architect never said that His work should be spoilt or should want reforming; but simply, "I am ever with you to the consummation of the world."

When the Architect had said, "This do for a commemoration of Me," He spoke to the builders. Those builders did not fear that their successors would cease to build correctly ; for one of them says emphatically that his Lord's commandment shall continue to be observed "until He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26).

Let us leave, then, these unsatisfactory disputes, and do what will be more interesting and more fruitful. We will look at the building itself ; we will study the principles of the art on which it has been constructed, and see if we cannot find convincing proof that these were the acknowledged principles of the Divine Founder.

In other words, we will now leave the examination of the ground plans of Ritual, which have occupied us in this second part ; we will take some of the great principles which have presided over its development, and see what the New Testament reports about them.

2. But before doing so, I think it right to delay a little on one final question which may occur as a difficulty to the mind, though it cannot be an objection to the truth of what has been said.

It may be asked, Does not the Catholic view of tradition make the New Testament an incomplete work ; or can any plan be assigned according to which God has drawn the limits between Scripture and tradition ?

I reply that in many cases we must be satisfied with knowing the fact of God's Providence, without being able to attain to its intrinsic reason; and this seems to be partly the case as regards the Canon of the New Testament. It is the Catholic belief that God inspired the sacred writers both as to what they say, and as to what they omit; and there are many cases when we can discover deep and beautiful wisdom in an omission. But there are many cases when we shall be at a loss to know why great prominence is given to certain things and others are passed over.

However, I think that a careful examination of the structure of the historical books will reveal to us the method which directed the historians in their statements and omissions.

They seem to have entered into detail with regard to those things that were transitory, and to have passed lightly over those things that were to be permanent, and which would therefore speak for themselves. The birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ were transitory actions; they were to take place once only. They were ever to be remembered, but never to be repeated. Now, though these great facts are commemorated in unwritten tradition, and bound up with the Ritual of the Church, yet the circumstances which attended them were such as could scarcely have been transmitted safely and in detail without writing. As God wished

these circumstances to be remembered, He inspired the Evangelists to enter into the fullest detail in relating them.

So also with regard to the words of Jesus Christ. Many besides those now known may have been in the mouths of the first Christians, like that which St Paul quoted to the elders at Ephesus; but for ages the memory has perished of all but such as are recorded in the Gospels. We conclude that God inspired the Evangelists to record all such of the words of His Divine Son as it was pleasing to Him to communicate to future ages.

But when we turn to the second class of things, those which are in their own nature permanent, we find a different plan pursued. "The things of the kingdom of God" are referred to (Acts i. 3), but not related in detail. The government and hierarchy of the Church, the Church's worship, her sacraments and rites, were to be visible and imperishable institutions. They would bear witness to themselves—tell their own tale. They would thus be familiar and well known to all those for whom the historians wrote. It was natural, therefore, to omit these things, or merely to mention their first origin, or to refer to them by an allusion.

Amongst these familiar things were the great doctrines of the faith. These are everywhere supposed, seldom spoken of explicitly. Perhaps of all matters

connected with Scripture this is the most important to bear well in mind. The leading doctrines of theology are often not clearly and explicitly stated in Scripture. Explicit statements of the Blessed Trinity, the Divinity of Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, of each of the seven sacraments, of the great Christian sacrifice, of the priesthood, hierarchy, government of the Church, are certainly not to be found in the New Testament, as they are in the decrees of Councils; though Catholics contend that these doctrines are there in germ, or in allusion,—that they are implied and presupposed. With Protestants this is a great objection. They have come to think that not only should there be Scripture proof for every doctrine, but that the amount of such proof should be proportioned to the importance of the doctrine. But is there any difficulty to the mind of an educated Catholic? Is he perplexed at perceiving that much that is plain in Councils is obscure in Scripture? and that the relative importance of certain doctrines and practices in the Catholic Church does not correspond to their relative prominence or to the space they occupy in the New Testament? No. This discovery can be no embarrassment to him, since it is precisely what he would expect, if the New Testament was written for men who held the doctrine and observed the practices of modern Catholics.

Let us take, for an example, the method of writing

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used by St Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. When he gives an abridgment of an Apostle's discourse in a Jewish Synagogue, or in a heathen market-place, he merely details the process by which the Apostles insinuated themselves into their hearers' minds. As this process would vary according to circumstances, it would not be known to St Luke's readers. They would remember how the Apostles succeeded with themselves; they would be glad to know how they had succeeded with others. This, therefore, would be exactly the kind of information St Luke would be likely to give. But when once the Apostles had found docile hearers, their instruction would be of the same tenor in every place. St Luke's readers had personal experience of that instruction; there was no necessity to repeat it to them. It would have been wearisome to do so. Locke has noticed that when St Paul preached to the Jews or to proselytes of the Jews, he said nothing to them of the believing in one true God, Maker of heaven and earth; which he did when preaching to heathens; and the reason he assigns for this difference is evident enough: "It was needless," he says, "to press this truth about God to those who believed and professed it already." Now, a precisely similar account may be given of St Luke's manner of abridging the Apostle's sermons. As St Paul thought it unnecessary to teach the unity of God to Jews who knew it already, so St Luke thought

it needless to tell Christians that the Apostle taught his converts the Trinity of Persons ; because his Christian readers knew the Apostle's doctrine already.

He says it equivalently when he relates that the converts were baptized ; for he is writing to Christian converts, who had themselves been baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It would have been almost an impertinence in St Luke, had he wearied his readers with the first elements of Christianity, and with repetition of the facts of their daily experience.

If Christians in those days had been like Protestants now, divided into a multitude of sects ; one affirming, the other denying, Jesus Christ to be God ; one adoring, the other rejecting, a Trinity of Persons ; one believing baptism to be an efficacious sacrament, the other regarding it as a mere figure ; one believing in, and worshipping the real Presence, the other calling such worship idolatrous—if such had been the condition of those first Christians, then St Luke would have adopted a very different method in his narrative. He would have passed rapidly over the Apostle's adventures, and dwelt little on his preliminary preaching, while he would have enlarged on the precise meaning given to the articles of faith controverted among his readers.

But St Luke was writing to men who, like Catholics of the present day, were united in faith. To his readers

the facts and the truths of Christianity were objective, undisputed realities, clearly and universally admitted. He therefore adopts exactly the style which Catholics make use of under similar circumstances.

If two converts to the Catholic faith compare notes regarding their conversion, they will dilate on the points in which they differed, on the events or the train of reflections which led them respectively to seek admission into the Church; but they will never waste time in asking each other about the nature of the creed they were taught, and which they professed, or the form of their reception. They know they were both taught the same creed, and both admitted by the same rites.

If a missionary writes home to Catholics, he dwells on his adventures, and the arguments by which he convinces the ignorant savage or the learned bonze; but he does not tire his readers by repeating the Apostles' Creed on the occasion of each conversion that he narrates. You might read through a volume of the annals of the propagation of the faith without meeting a single passage in which the missionary informs his fellow-Catholics at home, that he believes in seven sacraments, and teaches his converts to believe the same. It may crop up incidentally, but it will be only incidentally; and the last book, perhaps, from which a reasonable man would think of gathering a full and precise notion of the Catholic creed and discipline,

would be those very historical letters which everywhere presuppose them.

There is then nothing whatever to perplex a Catholic in the fact that nowhere in the New Testament is it explicitly stated that there are Three Persons in God, distinct, yet of one nature ; or that the Son of God is God the Son, or that Confirmation is a sacrament, or that the sacrament of Penance is the only plank after making shipwreck of baptismal innocence, and the rest.

We feel no more embarrassed at such omissions than we should do if we found it nowhere explicitly stated in a gardener's life and journals that the sun rises and sets, that there are four seasons in the year, that rain is necessary to the fertility of the soil, and similar truisms. One would scarcely expect such well-known facts to be set down even in a formal treatise on gardening ; though they doubtless would be so stated were any person found to deny them. But in the life or correspondence of a gardener, we should expect to find them everywhere taken for granted and alluded to as too familiar to writer and to reader to require more distinct mention. Now, neither the Gospels nor the Acts of the Apostles nor the Epistles are formal treatises on the Christian faith and discipline. Therefore Catholics do not look in them for formal statements of elementary truths. We take, not from them, but to them, our belief in the Blessed Trinity, and it unlocks many

a passage ; we take to them our belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and it makes everything plain ; we take to them our belief in the sacraments, and we find just those indications that we should expect to find under the circumstances in which they were written.

A most important consequence is contained in these principles as regards the method pursued by Protestants.

They assume, without proof, and contrary to the truth, the completeness of the New Testament as an exponent of revelation, and that it is intended by God to be the sole source of knowledge to mankind regarding the Christian religion.

If this were so, not only would all necessary doctrines and practices of that religion find explicit statement, but they would hold the relative prominence in the Bible that they do in the mind of God, and ought to do in reality ; whereas the fact is precisely contrary.

Hence it follows :—

a. That this negative argument, which Protestants so triumphantly cast at some of our doctrines or practices, as if they were condemned by the fact that no explicit mention is made of them in the New Testament, this argument is simply worthless.

b. It follows, also, that when a creed or rule of life is drawn exclusively from a document in which the

essential parts of the system are omitted or mentioned only in allusion, while minor details occupy an ample space, there is every likelihood that the minor points will get an undue importance, while the essential things will be put in the background, or be neglected altogether.

St Paul, for example, complains to the Hebrews that they are still children requiring to be fed with milk, that is, to have the rudiments of Christian faith and morals repeated to them. He thinks the oral instruction they have received ought to have done this. He does not want to occupy himself with it again. In a word, he wants to write an Epistle to men, not a catechism for children. He determines to do so: "Wherefore," he says, "leaving the word of the beginning of Christ" (as Catholics would say—"What every Christian ought to know"), "let us go on to things more perfect, not laying again the foundation." He does not want to repeat in his Epistle the foundation, or fundamental truths of Christianity. He merely indicates what that foundation is: "Not laying again the foundation, of penance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of imposition of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Heb. vi. 1, 2). He here places the doctrine concerning Ritual as among the very foundations of Christianity, those elementary

truths and facts which ought to be familiar to every disciple of Christ by the living and traditional teaching he has received, *and which ought therefore to find no place in his Epistles.*

Now is it not evident that if men forgetting this structure of the Epistles, go to them as to a catechism for an exposition of the whole Christian system, or look in them for the fundamental things, they will expose themselves to the most serious mistakes? Allusions will certainly be misunderstood, and even when the meaning of what is clear is attained, it will be perverted by the unnatural position which is assigned to it.

This will help us to understand the words of St Peter. He says that in St Paul's Epistles are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. And he adds immediately the following warning :—" You therefore, brethren, knowing these things before, take heed, lest being led aside by the error of the unwise, you fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ " (2 Pet. iii. 16-18.)

The existence of the obscurities here alluded to proves them to be designed by God. We must believe that God inspired St Paul to write thus obscurely. But the fact of the danger to which these obscurities expose the unlearned and unstable ought to convince any one

that God has provided a remedy against the danger. The exhortation of St Peter shows what this remedy is. He tells his disciples not to let the interpretation of difficult passages of Scripture which may either occur to themselves, or be suggested by others, make them "fall from their steadfastness," *i.e.*, abandon their steadfast adherence to the doctrine and discipline of Christ, which they have received orally from their teachers. If they hold fast to tradition they may "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ," by reading the Scriptures. If they have not tradition, Scripture will only make still broader for them the road that leads to "destruction." To those who are steadfast to the tradition they have received, the very difficulties of Scripture will be a powerful help to grow in grace. They will exercise their patience, excite their attention, and provoke a most fruitful labour in their solution. But of course these are exercises not for the unlearned and unstable, but for those who are settled in the faith.

The search we are now instituting into the character of Ritual is one of these exercises. By the writer it was undertaken, not for his own conviction, but for his own edification. The great Archbishop of Canterbury St Anselm had taught him, that though a Christian may never dispute the truth of what the Catholic Church teaches, he may try to discover the reason, the wisdom, and the beauty of her teaching.

“Nullus quippe christianus debet disputare quomodo quod Catholica Ecclesia certe credit non sit, sed quærere rationem quomodo sit. Si potest intelligere, Deo gratias agat ; si non potest, non immittat cornua ad ventilandum, sed submittat caput ad venerandum.”

PART III.



THE FORMATION OF CATHOLIC RITUAL BY PRINCIPLES RECOGNISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PATTERN ON THE MOUNT.

IN the first part of this essay, without examining details, we took a general view of the character of Catholic Ritual, and found a striking resemblance between its main features and those of the worship recorded in the New Testament as peculiarly Christian.

In the second part we examined the ground-plans of Catholic Ritual, so far as they are contained in the New Testament; and we found that the New Testament, far from professing to contain full information on this point, everywhere refers the inquirer to the Ritual itself.

Enough is said to show that Christianity has a Ritual; enough is not said to tell us its details or its precise nature. The New Testament, from beginning to end, leads us to the Church. If any one reject the Church, while he appeals to the Bible, the Church can but say to him: "Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me; but you will not come to me that you may have life."

Another portion of our inquiry yet remains. We have to see how the great Catholic Ritual grew up. Its *origin* was not in the study of Scripture; and Scripture tells us that neither should it have been. Its origin is divine, and more ancient than Scripture.

Its *growth*, however, has resulted in a striking resemblance to what Scripture relates. What effect, then, has Scripture had upon its growth? or what does Scripture tell us of the source of its vitality? These questions will occupy us in this third part.

St Paul reminds us, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that the appurtenances of Jewish worship were framed by Moses according to a pattern that was shown to him in heavenly vision on the Mount (Heb. viii. 5), and that the priesthood of the law and its functions were a shadow of heavenly things. By these heavenly things St John Chrysostom understands the sacrifice and sacraments of the Catholic Church on earth; and he enumerates especially the sacrament of Baptism, which opens the kingdom of heaven, the sacrament of Penance, which has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the Altar and its Sacrifice, which receives the King of Heaven Himself, and the Divine Office, in which the Church on earth emulates the heavenly choirs.

And St Chrysostom does not exaggerate. For the worship of the Catholic Church is nothing else than a

perpetual contemplation, adoration, and reproduction of that life of the Son of God by which heaven was brought down on earth.

In answer to an objection that there is in the New Testament no code of Ritual corresponding to that which occupies so conspicuous a place in the Old Testament, I replied, in an early part of this essay, that no such written code was necessary, because the Christian Church has the Spirit of God, which supersedes it. Our High Priest, says St Paul, in the chapter from which I have just quoted, is not like Moses : "He is the Mediator of a better testament, which is established on better promises." The Apostle then quotes those promises from Jeremias : "This is the testament which I will make to the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will give my laws into their mind, and in their heart I will write them, and they shall not teach every man his brother, saying : Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest of them."

The knowledge, then, of our Lord Jesus Christ,—one easily attained and universal, the gift of the indwelling Spirit of God—will be to the Christian Church in the place of a written code, which was the testament to the Jews. The "PATTERN" on which the eyes of the Christian Church are ever fixed, is the life of her Divine Spouse. The worship of the Church was not

the creation of a day, it was not a system organised according to some theory by Pope or Council. It was the growth of ages, of multitudes of minds and hearts, regulated indeed and reduced to order by authority, yet in itself the result of the working of a supernatural instinct ; and that instinct was the contemplation, love, and adoration of Jesus Christ. The Church has fixed her eyes incessantly on the mysteries of His Life, and Death, and Resurrection. Seeking to recall to the minds of her children each of these events in its turn, she has created the great cycle of fasts and feasts which make up the ecclesiastical year. Distributing to her children the graces which her Divine Spouse has entrusted to her, she has naturally adopted the words and forms which He used Himself. Any one who examines the Ritual and Pontifical, the Missal and Breviary, will see how minute and tender has been the Church's memory ; and he will understand that art and splendour have been employed by the Church, not to destroy "the simplicity of the Gospel," but vividly to represent its most touching scenes.

He will see that if the character of her great days varies, it is because of the variety with which God Himself surrounded the Divine Object of her contemplation. If the Churches blaze with lights on Christmas night, it is because "the brightness of God" shone in the fields of Bethlehem. If the Churches are draped

in black and purple on Good Friday, it is because God Himself covered the earth with a pall of darkness while His Son hung on the Cross of Calvary. If the Churches display all their riches on Easter Day, it is because the angel hosts wore robes of snowy splendour on the morning of the Resurrection.

It has been objected that the Church's system is a kind of "spiritual drill," repugnant to natures having any spontaneity of action, and that real religious joy and sincere religious sorrow will not adjust themselves by happy accident to the proper days of the week and seasons of the Christian year. This may be so in those who have no living faith in Jesus Christ.

But it is too late, after eighteen centuries of Christian experience, to bring forward *à priori* theories like this. Even Wordsworth bears testimony to "a stir of mind too natural to deceive," produced by the "due return" of those few rites and usages which Protestantism has retained. And to call in question the depth and reality of this stir of mind, and of heart too, when the vivid ceremonies of Catholic worship appeal to the faith of Catholic populations, is to deny the testimony of history and experience.

It may be superfluous, after all that has now been said, to notice any more objections. Yet my rule in this controversy has been that truth is often made most apparent, at least to those who have learnt to object

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against it, by the statement and refutation of the errors opposed to it.

Dr Vaughan knew that Catholics appeal to the divine wisdom given to the Church to create Ritual. He attempts to meet this by a very singular argument. "Could the Christian Church," he says, "be shown to be competent to create such a Ritual, she could furnish no stronger evidence of being in a state in which it behoves her to do without it—inasmuch as the power to devise such a representative system, supposes such a knowledge of the truth to be presented, as to make it clear that the end which all such systems are designed to subserve has been already gained. The power which can give the truth to the intelligence and the heart, is forgetting its high obligation in attempting to give it through marble or upon canvas."

I commit this last sentence to the consideration of all admirers of art. After such a specimen of iconoclasm, I think the saying of an illustrious writer will not seem altogether uncharitable: "What some men call Apostolic simplicity is more acutely noted down by others as Calvinistical folly." It is evident, at least, that the principles upon which the Catholic mode of worship is attacked, would destroy all art, if not all beauty, from the universe.

But let us examine Dr Vaughan's reasoning. If the Church, he says, possesses that fulness of the know-

ledge of God, which the creation of Ritual presupposes, she stands in no need of Ritual, since Ritual is a means of learning about God.

Is there not here a strange confusion of ideas—a confounding of society itself with the individuals who compose it? If a society possesses a full tradition, does it follow that no individual requires to be taught by the society of which it is a member? Or does it follow that the society needs not to hand on its tradition, while its living members are perishing, and giving place to new ones?

If a nation is distinguished by a martial spirit, would any statesman say—"The national courage is sufficient. No public monuments need be erected to commemorate past exploits, no pomp and pageantry of war need be used to kindle the hearts of the citizens. Each individual possesses the full spirit of the nation, and the next generation, without any external aids, will inherit all our fiery valour. A nation that is capable of martial display cannot be possessed of real courage"?

No nation ever acted on a theory like this. It is neither written in human nature nor in the Gospel. "Do this for a commemoration of me" is the language of Jesus Christ. It was but a higher application of an ancient and universal instinct.

Moses had said to the Jews, "These words that I command thee shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt

tell them to thy children. . . . And thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand, and they shall be and shall move between thy eyes, and thou shalt write them in the entry and on the doors of thy house" (Deut. vi. 6-9). Was this a carnal and sensual mode of teaching? Was it imposed on the Jews because they were merely the slaves of external forms? It would be folly to say so.

These external means were to be used because the words were *in the hearts* of the fathers, and in order that they might be in the hearts of the children. "And when thy son shall ask thee to-morrow, saying, What mean these testimonies and ceremonies and judgments? thou shalt say: We were bondmen," &c. (ver. 20).

The Catholic Church was to have deeper knowledge and more fervent love, but the Spirit that should impart these would not abolish, but vivify, that mode of teaching which was founded on human nature. It had been foretold by the prophet Zacharias, "I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced" (Zach. xii. 10). St John affirms that these last words were fulfilled in the Passion of Jesus Christ. But the "spirit of grace and of prayer" was not given to the blasphemers, but to the adorers, of Jesus crucified. We must look in Christian history to see how these words were

accomplished. The Church has carried out in a Christian form that which Moses commanded to the Jews. The cross of Jesus Christ has been to her what the words "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" were to them. The cross is engraven on her heart, and therefore she is ever talking of it to her children. She bids them wear it as an ornament around their necks, and she places it in the entry and on the doors of the house.

A dissenting minister sees this fulfilment of prophecy ; but he can see what is Catholic only to criticise and to suspect. "Their thoughts," he cries, "are ever about the man who is suffering, bleeding, dying, a sensuous thought, rather than about the grand idea of the atonement." But in this captious mood men can neither hear the voice of grace nor that of nature. Yet there are moments when nature makes itself heard. Then the heart speaks the very language of Catholic Ritual.

Dr Watts, who was certainly not favourable to Catholics, forgot the traditions of controversy under the influence of the humanising spirit of poetry. Alluding to the real or supposed custom of lovers carving their mistresses' names on the trunks of trees, he says he will do the same out of love for Jesus Christ :

" I 'll carve our passion on the bark ;
And every wounded tree

Shall drop and bear some mystic mark
That Jesus died for me.
The swains shall wonder when they read,
Inscribed on all the grove,
That Heaven itself came down and bled,
To win a mortal's love."

Poor Dr Watts! he spoke but the language of affection, and he expressed unconsciously the very thought that once covered our land with crosses and wayside crucifixes. Yet, according to his brother minister, he is guilty of a sensuous thought; and Dr Vaughan would remind him, in his pedantic way, that, if he was competent to carve memorials of his faith and love, he could furnish no stronger evidence of his being in a state in which it behoved him not to do so—inasmuch as the power to devise such a representative system supposes such a knowledge of the truth as to make it clear that the end has been already gained.

Let men only learn to love rather than to protest, and the whole conduct of the Catholic Church in the matter of worship will be no longer to them the riddle that it now is. It is altogether founded on the love of Jesus Christ. But love must interpret the conduct of love; cold hearts cannot discover its secrets.

The words spoken by Jesus Christ, when instituting the first and noblest of all Rites, "This do for a commemoration of me," are the key to the whole of Catholic worship. It is to commemorate Him that her doctors have written, that her poets have sung, that her archi-

pects and artists have laboured, that her musicians have composed. All her efforts have ever been to keep alive in the minds and hearts of her children an affectionate remembrance of what their Redeemer taught, did, and suffered for their sakes.

And this will explain the form which her Liturgy has gradually assumed in the course of ages. Although, as I showed in the second part, the essential features of her Ritual are anterior to the inspired writings, yet the possession of these writings by the Church has moulded them subsequently in many details. The Church, ever studying, ever meditating on the Gospels of her Spouse, has culled every flower from them to adorn her Ritual. Every word that our Blessed Lord spoke, every action that He performed, the least details of His actions, the very sigh of His heart, or glance of His eye, have found attentive observation and affectionate remembrance; and have been interwoven into some prayer of her Liturgy, or commemorated in some ceremony of her Ritual.

The proofs of all this can only be apparent to those who will try to study and understand her books. Alas! in the present day how few even of her children do this as it was done in those ages when the preparation to take an intelligent part in the divine worship was deemed no inconsiderable portion of the training of a Christian gentleman!

However, even the stranger who has eyes to see and ears to hear cannot altogether miss the spirit of her worship. As I have so often had to quote the words of Protestant ministers only to refute them, I am glad to conclude this chapter with the words of one of that class which will form a pleasing contrast to the many passages we have read.

The celebrated Lavater thus writes his impressions of a Catholic Church :—"He doth not know Thee, O Jesus Christ, who dishonoureth even Thy shadow. I honour all things where I find the intention of honouring Thee. I will love them because of Thee. What then do I behold here? What do I hear in this place? Does nothing under these majestic vaults speak to me of Thee? This cross, this golden image, is it not made for Thy honour? The censer which waves round the priest, the Gloria sung in choirs, the peaceful light of the perpetual lamp, these lighted tapers, all is done for Thee. Why is the Host elevated, if it be not to honour Thee, O Jesus Christ, who art dead for love of us? Because It is no more, and Thou art It, the believing Church bends the knee. It is in Thy honour alone that these children, early instructed, make the sign of the cross, that their tongues sing Thy praise, and that they strike their breasts thrice with their little hands. It is for the love of Thee, O Jesus Christ, that one kisses the spot which bears Thy adorable blood. For

Thee the child who serves, sounds the little bell, and does all that he does. The riches collected from distant countries, the magnificence of chasubles, all that has relation to Thee. Why are the walls and the high altar of marble clothed with tapestry on the day of the Blessed Sacrament? For whom do they make a road of flowers? For whom are these banners embroidered? When the Ave Maria sounds, is it not for Thee? Matins, vespers, prime, and nones, are they not consecrated to Thee? These bells within a thousand towers, purchased with the gold of whole cities, do they not bear Thy image cast in the very mould? Is it not for Thee that they send forth their solemn tone? It is under Thy protection, O Jesus Christ, that every man places himself who loves solitude, chastity, and poverty. Without Thee, the orders of St Benedict and St Bernard would not have been founded. The cloister, the tonsure, the breviary, and the chaplet render testimony of Thee. O delightful rapture, Jesus Christ, for Thy disciple to trace the marks of Thy finger where the eyes of the world see them not! O joy ineffable for souls devoted to Thee, to behold in caves and on rocks, in every crucifix placed upon hills and on the highways, Thy seal and that of Thy love! Who will not rejoice in the honours of which Thou art the object and the soul? Who will not shed tears in hearing the words, 'Jesus Christ be praised'? O the hypocrite who knoweth that

name, and answereth not with joy, 'Amen!' who saith not, with an intense transport, 'Jesus, be blessed for eternity, for eternity!'" *

* Lavater, quoted by Digby in "Mores Catholici," Book v., c. 2.

CHAPTER XV.

COMPENSATION.

IN order to explain still more fully the spirit of Catholic worship, I must now enter into some detail regarding another of the pervading principles which have helped to mould it.

This principle or instinct is that of compensation. It is mainly the result of the Incarnation, and therefore pre-eminently characteristic of the religion of Jesus Christ.

When the inspired writer, before the Incarnation, gave a reason for the splendour of God's worship, he found it in the majesty of God. "What shall we do to glorify Him? for the Almighty Himself is above all His works. The Lord is terrible and exceeding great, and His power is admirable. Glorify the Lord as much as ever you can, for He will yet far exceed, and His magnificence is wonderful" (Ecclus. xliii. 30-32).

But if we be asked now to give a reason for using all possible splendour, and all possible exactitude, in the worship of God, we shall find that reason not merely in

the Majesty of God, but in His humiliations—and the worship of Christians is not merely adoration, but it is compensation.

Compensation or reparation is an instinct native to the human heart. When a man has been to some expense, or gone through labour, or endured suffering, or submitted to humiliation for the sake of another, if the latter has any feeling of generosity, he resolves to make some return to his benefactor. This is not the unwillingness of a proud heart to lie under an obligation ; it is the unwillingness of a humble and a sensitive heart that he, who has conferred an obligation which it accepts, should be a loser or sufferer on its account. Thus, when a man has exposed his life or devoted his energies, or spent his fortune for his country or his native city, a grateful and generous people try to make him some compensation ; he receives a decoration, he is raised to the baronetcy or the peerage, or a public monument is erected to his honour. It would be strange indeed if this instinct of the human heart found no place in the worship of Jesus Christ.

A writer whom I quoted at the beginning of this essay uses an argument in favour of "simplicity" in religious worship which betrays an almost incredible confusion of mind ; and yet it is often urged as if invincible.

"Our Lord's whole life on earth," he says, "was

conducted in the very simplest and plainest manner. Should we not try to imitate His walk, if we are really anxious, for religion's sake, to act rightly?" I reply, that to imitate our Divine Master's poverty in what regards ourselves is a sublime evangelical counsel; but to retain our riches for our personal use, and refuse to employ them in His worship, on the plea that for our sakes He became poor, is as sordid a sophism as ever entered the human heart.

The reasoning should stand thus:—"My Lord has embraced poverty for me; then I will pour out my riches at His feet: for me He has humbled Himself; then I will exalt Him: for my sake He has exposed Himself to men's neglect; then will I redouble my homage and adoration."

But when I read such passages as the above, I cannot help recalling our Lord's saying about "the children in the market-place."

The Church may pipe to men, and they will not dance: she may lament, and they will not mourn (Mat. xi. 17). "Let the worship of Jesus Christ be rich and splendid," she says. "No!" men answer; "He loved poverty on earth, He must love it still." "Well, then," cries the Church again, "if Jesus Christ loves poverty now, imitate Him in your own lives." "No," again answers the world; "it is enough that Christ was born in a manger; His children are not always to

tabernacle there. Christ is not to be the pauper of the universe for ever; He is to be the King of glory."

I will accept these words in a nobler sense. No! "Christ is not to be the pauper of the universe for ever." We will not treat Him as a pauper because for our sakes He became poor.

Was not that the thought of the Wise Men of the East when they found Him in the crib of Bethlehem? Because He seemed weak and lowly, they prostrated themselves at His feet; because He seemed so poor, they opened their treasures and offered their gifts.

Had theirs been the modern Protestant theory, let us see how they would have acted. When they found the King of the Jews in such unexpected circumstances, they would have conferred together. They would have said, "We have made a gross mistake; we thought, before setting out on our journey, according to our traditional notions, that God should be worshipped by prostrations, and by the offering of gifts. Yet does not the spectacle now before our eyes convince us of the contrary? Look at that little Infant wrapped in poor swaddling-clothes! what can be more 'simple and plain,' nay, abject and miserable, than His appearance? If He has chosen poverty, let us not insult Him with our treasures: if He loves to be humble, let us not contradict Him by our prostrations."

Such language must sound ludicrous and irreverent ;

yet what is it but the Protestant theory tested by the Gospel to which it appeals? Let us then repeat it again: Christ is not to be the pauper of the universe for ever.

When the fathers were assembled at Ephesus for the consideration of the teaching of Nestorius, the heresiarch, in the presence of several bishops, exclaimed, that he could never bring himself to adore as his God a Child laid in a manger, nourished at a woman's breast, and seeking refuge from His persecutors by flight. As this pretended reverence for the majesty of God had made impression on some gross minds, whose notions of the Godhead were more Pagan than Christian, several bishops undertook to explain the mystery of the Incarnation to the people. Amongst others was the learned Theodotus of Ancyra. He preached before an immense concourse in the Church of the Blessed Virgin. The importance of the occasion, the magnificence of the place and of the assembly, gave animation to his words, and after having shown that the humiliations of the Son of God, being chosen voluntarily, were a proof, not of weakness, but of clemency in God, and a manifestation, rather than a contradiction, of the divine attributes, he confirmed what he had been saying by an appeal to what was passing before their very eyes. "That little Child," he cried, "who by His secret and ineffable power drew then the Magi to His crib, is the same who

has gathered now this venerable assembly and brought about this glad festivity ; now not laid in the manger, but exposed for veneration on this altar. That crib indeed is the parent of this holy table. He was laid in that that He might be distributed from this, as the life-giving food of the faithful. Yes! that crib was a prophecy of this magnificent altar ; the Virgin who knelt there has become the mother of the choirs of consecrated virgins who worship here ; the squalor of the stable of Bethlehem has built this glorious temple, and the swaddling-clothes which bound those infant limbs have purchased for us the loosing of the bonds of sin to-day."

His words were received with applause ; for in those days, when the memory of the days of persecution was still fresh, and the conversion of the Empire had but recently allowed the Church to develop the magnificence of external worship, Christians did not look on the new order of things as a contradiction, but as a compensation for the constraint and poverty of former years. They saw in the change that the mustard-seed had grown into a tree ; that the leaven was penetrating and raising the whole mass of human institutions.

Dr Newman, in one of his Anglican sermons, eloquently developed the same thought to which Theodotus gave utterance at Ephesus. The passage is too beautiful and appropriate that I need apologise for

quoting it. "The Son of God," he says, "was in the world from the beginning, and man worshipped other gods; He came into the world in the flesh, and the world knew Him not; He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But He came in order to *make* them receive Him, know Him, worship Him. When He came He had not a place to lay His head; but He came to make Himself a place, to make Himself a home, to make Himself houses, to fashion for Himself a glorious dwelling out of this whole world, which the powers of evil had taken captive. He came in the dark, in the dark night was He born, in a cave under ground; in a cave where cattle were stabled, there was He housed; in a rude manger was He laid. There first He laid His head; but He meant not, blessed be His name! He meant not there to remain for ever. He did not resign Himself to that obscurity; He came into that cave to leave it. . . . And He gave not sleep to His eyes, or slumber to His eyelids, till He had changed His manger for a royal throne, and His grot for high palaces. Lift up your eyes, my brethren, and look around, for it is fulfilled at this day; yea, long ago, for many ages, and in many countries. Where is the grot? where the stall for cattle? where the manger? where the grass and straw? where the unseemly furniture of the despised place? Is it possible that the Eternal Son should have been born in a hole of the

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earth? Strange condescension undergone to secure a strange triumph! . . . He was not born in the Temple of Jerusalem; He abhorred the palace of David; He laid Himself on the damp earth in the cold night, a light shining in a dark place, till, by the virtue that went out of Him, He should create a Temple worthy of His name.

“And lo! in omen of the future, even in His cradle, the rich and wise of the earth seek Him with gold and frankincense and myrrh as an offering. . . . Pass a few generations, and the whole face of things is changed; the earth is covered with His temples. Go where you will, you find the eternal mountains hewn and fashioned into shrines where He may dwell, who was an outcast in the days of His flesh. Rivers and mines pay tribute of their richest jewels; forests are searched for their choicest woods; the skill of man is put to task to use what nature furnishes. Go through the countries where His name is known, and you will find all that is rarest and most wonderful in nature or art has been consecrated to Him. Kings’ palaces are poor, whether in architecture or in decoration, compared with the shrines which have been reared to Him.”

But let us continue our study of the Gospel.

When Magdalen poured out her precious ointment on our Saviour’s head, there were some who had indignation within themselves, and said: “Why was this

waste of the ointment made?" The word "waste" here seems exactly to express the view of men like the writer whom I have quoted. It implies that such an effusion of expensive ointment might have been suitably made in the case of an earthly king, who took delight in pomp and splendour, but that it was evidently out of place and thrown away when offered to Jesus Christ, who, by the plainness of His manner of life, showed how much He disdained whatever was rare and costly. To these murmurers it appeared that Mary's manner of worship was too ceremonious and unspiritual.

But let us listen with reverence to our Blessed Lord's answer: "Let her alone, why do you molest her? She hath wrought a good work upon me. . . . She is come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial. Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her" (Mark xiv).

The Spirit of God had revealed to the affectionate heart of the Magdalen the great principle of reparation—"She is come beforehand to anoint my body for the burial"—and Jesus foretells that when the true worshippers shall worship throughout the world in spirit and in truth, then shall this principle be fully recognised.

And was it not on the same principle of compensation that the chief external glories of our Blessed Lord's

life surround just those parts of it which in themselves were most humiliating?

At the time that He was teaching the multitude, healing the sick, raising the dead, He seems generally to have disregarded the external homage of men. But in the humiliation of His childhood, when no words of grace had yet fallen from His lips to draw after Him admiring crowds, no miracle obedient to His command had manifested His omnipotence, then He called His ministers from heaven, and their angelic voices resounded on the hills of Bethlehem; then the shepherds knelt around His crib; while the Eastern sages, with greater pomp, though with hearts as simple, fell prostrate at His infant feet, and spread their offerings before Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

And again, when the time of miracles was past, and that of His Passion and ignominy was beginning, the Spirit of God went out among the children of Jerusalem, and they came forth to meet Him; they cut branches from the trees, they spread their garments in His way, and as the procession entered Jerusalem they made the walls give back the echo of their cries: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He who cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

But there were then, as now, men who considered all these external marks of homage as uncalled for and improper, and they took offence because our Blessed

Lord seemed to tolerate them. "Hearest thou what these say?" they asked (Mat. xxi. 16), and they bade Him rebuke His disciples (Luke xix. 39). To whom He said: "I say to you that if these shall hold their peace the stones will cry out."

Yes! had there been no hearts found to render homage, external homage, and by that homage to make reparation to Jesus Christ in the day of His humiliation, then the very stones pressed by His feet as He went about doing good, the stones soon to be wet with the blood He would shed for the souls of men, those stones would have found hearts and voices to praise the Majesty of which He had emptied Himself for our sakes, and the love which had brought Him down so low.

I conclude, then, that if the Supreme Majesty of the Eternal and Invisible God afforded a reason to the Jews for doing their utmost to render His worship beautiful and splendid, Christians have an additional reason in the ineffable humiliation of the Incarnation for laying at the feet of their God, so great and yet so lowly, so ineffable in His abasements as well as so mysterious in His perfections, all the homage that nature and art can furnish, that lively faith and burning love can devise.

And now we have obtained a key wherewith to unlock much that is mysterious to Protestants in Catholic

worship. Would that they could believe what Catholics believe ! but at least, let them take note of what **we** believe, if they cannot receive it, and it will supply an answer to their questionings.

Why so many genuflections and prostrations? they ask; why so much pomp and splendour? Is not all this empty and meaningless, or at least, is it not excessive? Yes! we reply; *empty* when faith does not show you the Presence that fills our ceremonies with life; *meaningless* till love supplies its interpretation; *excessive* to those who have not learnt the excessive abasements which it is designed to compensate.

It is the worship in spirit and in truth which Jesus Christ foretold; but you who criticise and scoff, you do not know the *truth*, and you have not the *spirit* which inspires those hundreds of worshippers whose evident devotion so bewilders you: you see nothing but the altar and the priest, the candles and the genuflections; you see only with the eyes of the body, not with those of the soul, and therefore you laugh and mock, or you wonder and deplore. Turn then from what you cannot yet understand; turn and look at the worshippers; watch the faith, the piety, the love, apparent in their postures, or written on their faces; and it may yet happen to you, as to many before—"There cometh in one that believeth not, . . . and he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and so falling down on his face, he

will adore God, affirming that God is among you indeed" (1 Cor. xiv. 24).

To any candid intelligent inquirer, I offer this key to the spirit of Catholic worship. The Lord of Glory—it is thus the Church believes—for the sake of men, remains in a state of voluntary humiliation in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. Shall He be a loser by it? "No," she answers, "not if I can help it."

Let the architect task his greatest skill; let the sculptor and the artist come to his aid; let the richest stuffs be brought from the produce of the loom; let the mines give up their gold, their silver, and their jewels; let the rarest flowers display their hues and shed their fragrance round His altar; let clouds of incense express the homage of men's prayers, while hundreds of tapers declare the light of their faith and the gladness of their hearts. Our God is in a state of humiliation for our sake! Then let Him be lifted up on high; let men fall on their knees and bow their faces low to earth; let Him be carried in procession; and let us tell the world that if our God seems to be a prisoner, He is a "Prisoner of love," and that even in His prison-house He is the Sovereign of our hearts. He is silent. Then let us raise our voices; let the sound of melody be heard; let us proclaim in antiphon and hymn this great truth—that the more He has humbled Himself for our sake, the more should we delight to honour Him. "Tanto

Deus ab hominibus dignius honorandus est, quanto pro hominibus et indigna suscepit," says St Gregory.

I have heard men, who ought to have known better, make a scoff of the Blessed Sacrament because of the care which the priest had to take of it. They asked : "Is your God senseless or helpless, that His priest must be so anxious for Him?" They reminded me of a scene on Calvary : "They that passed by, blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, Vah ! Thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save Thyself by coming down from the cross" (Mark xv. 29). While the Catholic worship, both in spirit and in form, reminds me of what St John saw in heaven—the adoration of the Lamb : "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the ancients ; and the number of them was thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, *The Lamb that was slain* is worthy to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard all saying, To Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen ; and the four and twenty ancients fell down

on their faces, and adored Him that liveth for ever and ever" (Apoc. v. 11-14).

There is a chivalry in things divine as well as in things human. As the weakness of women and the helplessness of children appeal to the generosity of the strong man, so the *voluntary* helplessness of the Son of God appeals to the devotion and generosity of the faithful; and the minute prescriptions with which the Church guards the Blessed Sacrament, are not, as some think, the cold formalities of a worship which has no life, they are the delicate attentions of Christian chivalry, the loving expressions of worship in spirit and in truth.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GREAT LEGACY.

I HAVE touched in the last chapter on a dogma of Catholic faith, which is so fundamental in this whole question, that I cannot properly explain the Ritual of the Catholic Church without treating of it more expressly. The belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist has been most truly called "the fountain-head of Catholic devotion." *

I am well aware that this doctrine suggests to Protestants nothing but an acrimonious controversy, or a system of religion to them in the last degree incredible ; yet an intelligent and philosophic mind will feel perhaps the more interest in it on that very account. A thoughtful man will like to know how what seems to him so strange should by others be defended so warmly, and how others should find so many charms in what to him has no attraction. I am not, of course, about to enter into the whole controversy ; nor is it my purpose to explain here the grounds of Catholic belief. I shall

* "Le dogme générateur de la piété Catholique."

confine myself to the Ritualistic aspect of this doctrine ; and though I shall refer more to the Old Testament than I have hitherto done, it will be only to draw thence an argument of analogy for the New Testament.

Dr Vaughan, in his book against Ritualism, says, " It must be conceded that Protestants generally do not profess to comprehend such language as is sometimes used by Catholics on the subject of the Real Presence. What is more, we are quite sure that the persons who use these strange forms of speech have not themselves learnt to attach any clear or steady ideas to them."

Dr Vaughan must be utterly ignorant both of Catholic theology, Catholic books, and Catholic religious life, to venture on such an assertion. If he knew anything of the history of the Church, or had ever mixed with Catholics, he would know that the Real Presence, far from being some vague mystic dream of a few, is a doctrine most clearly defined, most popularly understood, of the most practical consequence. It is the very centre of the whole devotional, disciplinary, and ascetic system of Catholics. Probably there is no idea among those which can be called religious more "clear and steady" in the minds of every class than this.

That Dr Vaughan's ideas on the subject are far from being clear, as he indeed confesses, is evident from his next words ; "Protestants," he says "believe that our Lord, who may be said to be especially present in the

communion-service, is as really present everywhere, and that union with Him, comprehending in a sense oneness with Him and growth in Him, is available to the devout in all places and at all times. Why the persons who would restrict the presence of the Saviour, in the manner described, to a particular service should be necessarily more pious than those who feel that He is accessible to them everywhere, is not explained. How the pretensions of priests may be served by such a doctrine we can understand, but how Christian piety should be served by it is not so intelligible. But there are minds so mystical in their tendencies, and to which deep excitement of some sort is so indispensable, that almost any illusion which shall produce the coveted elevation is sure to be accepted and valued. In the Church of Rome there have always been religionists of this intense order."

Dr Vaughan ought to know that Catholics hold, certainly not less than Protestants, that union with Jesus-Christ is "available to the devout in all places and at all times." He ought to know that no Catholic ever thought of restricting the presence of the Saviour to a particular service. What purpose can it possibly serve thus to misstate a doctrine? How can any one hope to confute principles which he is not willing or able to understand?

"Catholics at least," says Dr Newman, "have a lively

illustration and evidence of the absurdity of Protestant private judgment, as exercised on the Apostolic writings, in the visible fact of its absurdity as exercised on themselves. They, as their forefathers, the first Christians, are a living body; they too preach, dispute, catechise, converse with innumerable tongues, saying the same thing, as our adversaries confess, all over the earth. Well, then, you would think the obvious way was, if they would know what we really teach, to come and ask us, to talk with us, *to try to enter into our views*, and to attend to our teaching. Not at all; they do not dream of doing so: they take their 'texts,' they have got their cut-and-dried specimens from our divines, which the Protestant tradition hands down from generation to generation. . . . As they have their chips and fragments of St Paul and St John, so they have their chips and fragments of Suarez and Bellarmine, and out of the former they make to themselves their own Christian religion, and out of the latter, our Anti-christian superstition."

However all are not such, unwilling to know the truth. There are some who before they judge would like to hear our explanations. It is for such I write, and I hope to make it *intelligible* at least to them, how Christian piety is served by the doctrine of the Real Presence.

In order to do so I will lay down and develop the

following propositions. There has been a Real Presence in a certain sense in every age of the world, which has been the centre of men's devotion : and since this Real Presence is in itself one of God's most excellent gifts, it could not be denied to the New Testament dispensation. It has indeed been granted to the Christian Church in a greater perfection and fulness : and it is at once the source of interior devotion, and the object of external ritual.

I will endeavour to pass as rapidly as my argument will allow through the history of this special sensible presence of God among men.

Scanty as are the records of man's abode in paradise, yet from the Book of Genesis we learn that before the fall, while man was in a state of innocence and happiness, he was honoured by the visits of his Creator, and by sensible manifestations of God's presence. The mind of Adam was unclouded by sin and passion ; everything he saw reminded him of the power, the wisdom, the goodness of God. He knew that God was everywhere, and at all times present. There was in his heart no aversion, no turning away from God, no forgetfulness of the Divine presence ; and yet, even then God did not consider that clear knowledge which Adam possessed to be sufficient. The mere knowledge that God is present, the faith, even the lively faith and reflection on this truth, can never touch the heart of man

so powerfully as some sensible sign, some token addressed to sight or hearing, by which God says to His creature—"See, I am here and I am thinking of thee." *

The reason is perhaps that, however certainly we may be assured that God is near to us, and thinking of us, yet we see in this no special proof of God's love or care for us. God cannot be absent; He cannot cease to think of us. But what is the nature of His thoughts? are they thoughts of peace, or thoughts of affliction? (Jerem. xxix. 11.) The mere fact of God's omnipresence does not answer that question. But when God calls to man by a voice, or appears to him in a sign, then man exclaims—"God is thinking of me, God is caring for me, God is loving me;" and his heart begins to beat, and he exclaims—"Who am I that God should be mindful of me, or that the Almighty and All-holy should love me?"

We are not told the precise nature of God's manifestations of Himself to Adam. We read that "they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise in the afternoon air" (Gen. iii. 8). It has been thought by some that the presence of God was announced to them by a sudden and mysterious rustling in the tops of the trees, and that, whether God appeared to them under a human form or not, they heard Him speak to them with human voice as a friend speaks with a friend.

* Emmanuel, by Abbé Martinet.

But man remained not long the friend of God. Sin made him His enemy, and destroyed this loving intercourse ; and when our first parents, after their fall, heard the usual token of God's visit, their guilty consciences smote them, and, instead of hastening as formerly, to welcome Him, they were afraid, and tried to hide themselves from the face of God amongst the thick trees. Alas ! man, flying away from God, hiding from God, telling God in fear or in hatred to keep away from him, to begone to heaven, to leave him alone with his guilty conscience and his sinful pleasures on earth ! That is the history of the human race, except so far as the mercy and grace of God have cleared away that guilt, and won back that reluctant heart to purity and love. And the mercy of God has thus pursued after man. If man has ever fled from God, God has ever sought for man. We should have been treated justly and according to our merits, if, when by sin we rendered ourselves unworthy of intercourse with God, and even fled in terror from His approach, He had withdrawn from man that special presence. And indeed, for many ages the apparitions of God were few and rare, and sometimes even when He appeared and spoke, it was as to Cain, with words of anger and of judgment. Yet still the human race knew that God had not entirely deserted it. Men knew that though no vision and no voice was granted to themselves, yet there were some

few favoured souls, patriarchs or prophets, to whom God appeared, with whom He conversed, and by whom He sent messages to them of warning, of love, and of mercy. Of Henoch, who lived before the flood, we are told that "he walked with God," and was seen no more, because "God took him," and we understand that to this holy man somewhat of the privilege of paradise was given, that he enjoyed that familiar intercourse and conversation with his God, probably under some sensible form, which had been granted to Adam before his fall.

But it would take me too long to relate how God showed Himself in visible form to Noe, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to Moses and to Josue, to Elias, to Daniel, and so many of the prophets. These things are related in the sacred history in detail, and they prove that, besides His universal presence with every man at all times, God has in every age bestowed, in the time and manner He thought fit, a more special presence on certain of His favoured servants.

For many years God had appeared only at uncertain intervals to some few saintly men. There was no permanent sensible presence of God upon earth. There was no one place of which it could be said that God's glory dwelt there more than in others. But as what is called in Scripture the "fulness of times" drew nearer, this great gift was bestowed more liberally.

God chose for Himself a peculiar people, and His

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perpetual visible presence was to be at once their bond of unity, their strength, their consolation, and their glory.

It will be sufficient for me merely to refer here to the mighty apparition of Mount Sinai. It was the inauguration of the perpetual sensible presence of God among men. Moses by God's command made the ark with its "propitiatory" (or mercy-seat) of purest gold, covered by the wings of the two cherubim. "Thence" said the Almighty, "will I give orders, and will speak to thee over the propitiatory and from the midst of the two cherubim" (Exodus xxv. 22). "After all things were perfected," adds the sacred historian, "the cloud covered the tabernacle of the testimony, and the glory of the Lord filled it. Neither could Moses go into the tabernacle of the covenant, the cloud covering all things, and the majesty of the Lord shining (Exod. xl. 33).

From that day God was said to sit between the cherubim; and for ages after, the history of the Jews is in great measure the history of the ark. When they remembered this Divine presence, when they were grateful for it, when they put their trust in it, when they worshipped it, and surrounded it with holiness of life, then, indeed, they were blessed by God, they were protected by Him against their enemies, and thus dwelt as it were under His wings in the abundance of peace.

But, when they either forgot this presence of God in the midst of them, or when they put a superstitious trust in it, thinking that it would deliver them like a charm in spite of their sinful lives, then they experienced God's anger. It was indeed to this Divine presence that all holy men and women looked and prayed. It was this that made David, the royal prophet, exclaim, when obliged to live a fugitive in the mountains, at a distance from the ark of God,—“How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy courts above thousands. I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners” (Ps. lxxxiii.)

How many beautiful histories are related in the Old Testament of the devotion of God's people to His presence in the ark, whether preserved in the Tabernacle or the Temple. It localised without circumscribing their thoughts of God. It was the source of no error. It did not make them think of God as the heathens thought of their idols; though Moses could well say to them—“There is not any other nation so great, that hath gods so nigh them, as our God is present to all our petitions” (Deut. iv. 7).

At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon prays, “Is it then to be thought that God should indeed dwell upon earth? for if heaven and the heaven of heavens

cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built ?" (3 Kings viii. 27).

But though this particular presence of God produced no error regarding His divine nature, it impressed on the Jews in a wonderful manner the sense of God's providence over them, and His peculiar love for them, and it inspired them with a filial confidence in their necessities.

Wordsworth, in his "Excursion," has beautifully noted this providence of God :—

" Jehovah, shapeless Power above all powers,
Single and one, the omnipresent God,
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,
Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven ;
On earth, enshrined within the wandering ark,
Or out of Sion, thundering from His throne
Between the cherubim ; on the cherish'd race
Shower'd miracles, and ceased not to dispense
Judgments, that filled the land from age to age
With hope and love, and gratitude and fear,
And with amazement smote, thereby to assert
His scorn'd or unacknowledged sovereignty."

I will choose, from among many, one illustration of these truths, and of the manner of devotion of the Jews to the presence of God.

When Ezechias received the insulting letter of Rab-saces, "he went up to the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord, and he prayed in His sight, saying, O Lord God of Israel, who sittest upon the cherubim, Thou alone art the God of all the kings of the earth : Thou madest heaven and earth : incline thy ear and

hear: open, O Lord, thy eyes and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib" (4 Kings xix. 14-16).

Certainly Ezechias believed in the omnipresence of God, "who made heaven and earth." Why then did he not pray in his own palace? Why, if he must *show* God the letter, did he go and spread it before the ark? All this may not be intelligible to Dr Vaughan. He might perhaps include King Ezechias among those minds of "mystical tendencies, to which deep excitement is indispensable."

No doubt he was a "religionist of that intense order such as are often found in the Church of Rome." Yes, it would be easy to find a parallel to this Biblical scene in the devotion of Catholics. Let my reader enter any day into a Catholic chapel, at an hour when no public service is being carried on, and I doubt not he will see some poor man making his "visit" to the Blessed Sacrament, with a faith and confidence, and external devotion, just like that of Ezechias, though he may never have heard of the name of the Jewish King, or of the ark of the covenant, before which he prayed. But I must continue the history of God's presence.

The ark of the covenant has long since disappeared, and the magnificent Temple was destroyed by the Pagan Emperor, who declared that in this he was urged on by a power he could not resist, and that he was the instrument of the anger of God. The Jewish historian

Josephus informs us that shortly before the destruction of the Temple, those who ministered at the altar heard mysterious voices from behind the veil, saying, "Let us depart!" as if God was removing from the Jews His sensible presence for ever. But, before the Temple was destroyed, had come down on earth a far different presence of God. I mean the presence of the Godhead in the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ. "The Word had been made flesh, and dwelt among us." This was the presence announced of old by the prophets. It was the foreknowledge of this presence which made Isaiah break forth into the words, "You shall say in that day, Praise ye the Lord and call upon His name: make known His works among the people: rejoice and praise, O thou habitation of Sion, for great is He that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah xii. 4-6).

Let us notice some of the points of difference between the manifestation of God in the humanity of Jesus Christ and any of those apparitions which had gone before.

First, then, God's presence is more real. The voice that Adam heard in paradise was not really the voice of God; the flames of the burning bush, before which Moses hid his face, were not really the everlasting substance of God; the light that shone on the mercy-seat was not really the inaccessible light in which God dwells. These things were signs and tokens of

God's presence, but they were not God Himself. Whereas he that saw Jesus Christ saw God Himself. He did not, indeed, see the divine nature, but he saw the human nature, which God had made His own. The voice which spoke as never man spoke, and whose command the wind and the sea obeyed, was the voice of God; the eyes whose glance converted St Peter were the eyes of God; the feet over which Magdalene wept were the feet of God; the heart on which St John rested his head at the supper-table was the heart of God.

Yet, on the other hand, if God's presence was now more real, it was more hidden and mysterious. Hitherto the apparitions of God had been objects of sight rather than of faith. They could be seen alike by sinner or by saint, by the man of faith or by the infidel; or rather, he who saw them could not be an infidel, for the miracle convinced him even against his will. But it was not so with the Word made flesh. Many who saw Him believed that they gazed on a mere man; some even saw Him and despised Him, and called Him an impostor; and they nailed Him and crucified Him in their incredulity, and they knew not, as the Apostle says, that they were crucifying the Lord of Glory. It was not by His external appearance, but by His mighty works, by His divine wisdom, by His spotless life, by His loving heart, that

Jesus Christ was known to be God, living in the midst of us. Externally He was like other men, and before He began to manifest Himself it was necessary that the finger of St John Baptist should point Him out: Behold the Lamb of God. St John Baptist could say to the crowd—There hath stood One among you whom you knew not. God had come down on earth, and He had stood in the midst of a crowd of His own creatures, and He had been lost in the crowd, and been crushed, and jostled, and pushed hither and thither in the crowd; so hidden and mysterious is now the presence of God.

Consider, again, how much more gentle and loving is this manifestation of God's presence. When the lightnings flashed through the thick clouds of smoke which rose from Mount Sinai as from a great furnace; when the thunder-peal rolled around its summit; when the dreadful trumpet-note pierced the ears and made the hearts of the Jews tremble with fear, they prayed that God might no longer speak to them thus immediately, lest they should die, but that He would make known to them His will by the human lips of Moses. Then were the eyes of Moses opened, and he saw a great mystery which should be in days to come. He understood that the God who now appeared in such terrific majesty would one day lay aside all His terrors and appear as a man on the earth. And Moses

replied to the people's prayer—"You wish that I should speak to you. Well! God will raise up a Prophet like to me, and to Him you shall give heed." Like to him, not in majesty, power, or holiness, but in human form, in humility, and weakness.

And when the day of which Moses had spoken at length came, how changed was the scene. Instead of the dense clouds of smoke which rested on Mount Sinai, was the overshadowing of the Spirit of God on the bosom of the Blessed Virgin; instead of the flashes of lightning, were the loving glances interchanged between Mary and her Babe; instead of the piercing trumpet, were the plaintive cries of the Divine Child; instead of the peals of thunder, making the people's hearts die within them for very dread, were the angelic songs on the hills of Bethlehem, saying, "Fear not, we bring you tidings of great joy."

Emmanuel was come. At His first appearance He sought hospitality, and was refused even at the inn. Then He became the guest of Mary and of Joseph. When He left their roof, sometimes He had not a place to lay His head, and sometimes He went to be the guest of the publican or the pharisee.

And now, in this sketch of the history of God's presence on earth, we have come to the days spoken of by the prophets as the fulness of time. It is the day of which Isaias said, "Rejoice and praise, O habitation of

Sion, for great is He that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel." Is this history now complete? Has it come to an end? Is there to be any longer a special and sensible presence of God upon the earth, or is it henceforth to cease? To these questions the Protestant answer would be—These apparitions, these special manifestations of God came to an end with the Incarnation. On that day on which Jesus Christ ascended into heaven from Mount Olivet, and when the cloud hid Him from the longing gaze of His Apostles, vanished from the earth the last sensible token of God's presence amongst men. The days of apparitions are gone by. Henceforth the world is more spiritual, and needs no sensible signs; and so in the Christian Church, for the last eighteen hundred years there has been no place, as among the Jews, where the glory of God has dwelt.

How different from this is the Catholic faith. We believe that the fulness of times brought with it the fulness of God's sensible presence amongst men. We believe that all that went before the Incarnation was but a figure and a prelude of what followed, of what now is and will be to the end. We believe that ere Jesus Christ took away from the eyes of men the sight of His sacred humanity, He took means to perpetuate to the end of time His presence, in a certain sensible manner, on the earth. We believe that in the Holy

Eucharist He still dwells in the midst of us—that there especially He is Emmanuel—God with us. We believe that His presence in the Blessed Sacrament is as real as when He lay in the manger, walked in Jerusalem, or hung on the cross—that His presence is permanent, and will never cease to be till the end of time; above all, that it is no longer confined to one place, but that it girdles the whole earth. This is our faith, and this is why we rejoice and praise, because He that is great is in the midst of us, the Holy One of Israel.

Two objections, which, however, contradict each other, are continually cast against this belief of ours, and often by the very same lips. It is said that it is unspiritual, and that it is too spiritual.

There are some who pretend that those sensible tokens of God's presence which were granted to men in old times were condescensions to their weakness, to their carnal and unspiritual state, and that therefore they are not granted to Christians who are to live by faith.

The answer to this objection is easy. The visible presence of God was *not* granted to men because he was carnal and sensual. It was granted to him in paradise, when his soul was pure, his mind undimmed by sin, his sensual nature in entire subjection to his soul. It was granted to him because it fitted his double nature of soul and body.

"Upon the breast of new-created earth
 Man walk'd ; and when and wheresoe'er he moved,
 Alone or mated, solitude was not.
 He heard upon the wind th' articulate voice
 Of God ; and angels to his sight appear'd,
 Crowning the glorious hills of paradise,
 Or through the groves gliding like morning mist
 Enkindled by the sun. He sat and talk'd
 With winged messengers, who daily brought
 To his small island in th' ethereal deep
 Tidings of joy and love. From these pure heights
 Fell human kind, to banishment condemn'd."*

When man fell into sin, he almost forfeited the great gift of God's sensible presence. It was but gradually restored to him. As the fulness of times, the time of redemption, drew nearer, it became more perfect and more permanent ; and was consummated only in the person of Him who came to redeem us from sensuality, and make us spiritual.

To assert that the absence of any sensible token of God's presence is a more spiritual and perfect state, is to attack and overthrow the whole doctrine of the Incarnation.

Another objection made is, that this presence is too spiritual, that there is not enough for the senses. The language of many a Protestant is somewhat in this fashion. "The patriarchs and prophets," they say, "had tokens given them which clearly showed them the presence of God. Now, Catholics assert that God is present among them, yet we look at the Eucharist, and

* Wordsworth, "Excursion," Book iv.

we see nothing to denote His presence ; we have no proof whatever that God is in the midst of them."

To this I answer, that the just man lives by faith. We do indeed believe that a sensible sign, an object that meets the senses to remind them of the presence of God, is a great gift ; but, at the same time, we know that it is God's will that we should live by faith, and not by sight. In the Eucharist we have something for the senses, something which tells us that God is present in a certain place in a special manner, not from necessity, but from love, and for our sake ; yet, at the same time, this object that meets our senses and touches our hearts has no meaning or power except over those who live by faith. It is well worth a Protestant's calm consideration that the very mystery which is the object of the most elaborate and splendid Catholic ceremonial, is called by Catholics pre-eminently *Mysterium fidei*, "The Mystery of Faith."

It happens with regard to the Blessed Sacrament, as it happened to our Lord Jesus Christ when He was living on the earth. We have seen that He stood in the midst of men, and they did not know that He was near them. So too men are often in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and they do not know that God is near them, in the greatest prodigy of His power and love. Again, Jesus was pointed out to men, yet many, even when told that He was the Son of God, disbelieved

it, and they despised Him, and struck Him, and spat on Him, and put Him to death. So, too, it is preached, that Jesus is in the Blessed Sacrament, and many when they hear it disbelieve and scoff; and often they have gone so far as to outrage the Blessed Sacrament and trample it under their feet. And yet, though they laugh us to scorn for saying so, they will one day find that they were trampling under foot the Lord of Glory and the God of Love, quite as truly as the Jews crucified Him; with this difference, however, that then He suffered, now He is beyond the reach of man's malice; He can suffer no longer, however much men may outrage the veils of bread and wine behind which He lies concealed. Let me then draw out distinctly the argument of this chapter.

We have seen that a special visible presence of God on earth is a great mercy of God, exactly suited to our nature and our wants. We have seen that the frequency and permanence of this presence was God's original plan of dealing with His sinless creatures in paradise. We have seen that this plan was broken by the irruption of sin, but that it was gradually restored in the course of ages, becoming more and more perfect as our redemption drew nearer. Now, is it not inconsistent to believe all this, and yet to say that there is no such visible presence in the Church and kingdom of Jesus Christ? Christians thus are placed in a state

inferior not only to that of Adam in Paradise, but even of the Jews and the Patriarchs.

There are many outside the Church who are beginning to open their eyes to this inconsistency ; but they divide themselves into two parties, and come to exactly opposite conclusions.

Some cling fast to what they have read in Holy Scripture, which they believe to be inspired ; and then they reason thus :—The Jews were blessed with the special loving presence of God in their tabernacles ; can Christians be deprived of this privilege ? And they look around, and they see that Protestant churches, however rich, are empty ; they do not even profess to have a sanctuary or a visible presence of God ; they look at Catholic churches, and they see that over the tabernacle, when the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in it, hangs a lamp, and the lamp burns day and night, and tells them of the faith of the Holy Catholic Church—a faith which has never varied for eighteen hundred years ; a faith which is shared by all nations, that day and night reposes there the presence of the King of Kings, more real, more substantial, and more permanent than any given to the Jews. And many Protestants are becoming aware that the Catholic doctrine is in harmony with the Holy Scriptures which they have been taught to revere, while the doctrine of their own Church contradicts them, and they are exclaiming, like

Jacob, "Truly God is in this place, and I knew it not. How terrible is this place; this is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven."

But there is another school of Protestants who are adopting a much sadder consistency. They start, not from their belief in the Holy Scriptures, but from their disbelief of Catholic doctrine. They have made up their minds that miracles are now out of the question; that apparitions must, in the present age, be set down as delusions; that God now lets the world go its way, and does not visibly interfere to set it right.

Having embraced these as incontrovertible principles, they read the Old Testament Scriptures. There what must strike every one is, that if those records are true, in the old days God worked countless miracles, he appeared continually to men, he was ever interfering with the course of the world.

And men are beginning to feel that so utter a change in God's providence towards the world is incredible. And so, having settled with themselves that miracles are next to impossible now, they naturally begin to doubt whether they ever took place; having made up their minds that visions and apparitions are now fancies and delusions, they are beginning to form the same judgment about the visions and apparitions of the Old Testament; having adopted the philosophy that the only providence of God now is that of

natural law, they conclude that it was ever so, and that the seers and prophets and historians of the Old Testament spake only according to the conceptions of their own times when they represented the Invisible as controlling visibly the course of events.

I need but refer to such works as those of Dr Colenso, the "Essays and Reviews," the "Ecce Homo," to show how popular these theories are now becoming in England. And I must confess that the views of such writers, from *their* starting-point, are logical enough. If there are no miracles in the Christian Church, it is consistent to say that there never was one in that of the Jews. If there is no infallible voice to set men right now, there never was a divinely-commissioned messenger on earth. If Jesus Christ is not present in the tabernacle of Catholic churches, there never was a sensible Presence in the tabernacle of the Jews.

And the force of logic has been felt by poets no less than by theologians. It is enough to compare Milton with Wordsworth on the subject which now occupies us, to see the progress in negation which the necessity of consistency has forced upon men's minds.

We have no reason to question the sincerity of Milton's belief in the literal truth of the Mosaic narrative. A man of his sensibility, and who had

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given a special study to the subject, could not but feel that in the sensible presence of God in Paradise Adam had enjoyed a singular favour. It was therefore but natural that he should represent Adam as lamenting his loss.

“ This most afflicts me ; that departing hence
 As from His face I shall be hid, deprived
 His blessed countenance ; here I could frequent
 With worship place by place where He vouchsafed
 Presence Divine, and to my sons relate :—
 On this mount He appeared ; under this tree
 Stood visible ; among these pines His voice
 I heard ; here with Him at this fountain talk'd :—
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory
 Or monument to ages ; and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace ?
 For though I fled Him angry, yet, recall'd
 To life prolong'd, and promised race, I now
 Gladly behold, though but His utmost skirts
 Of glory ; and far off His steps adore.”

Nothing could be more natural than this pathetic lament of Adam. What a beautiful opportunity would have been here for a Catholic poet endowed with Milton's genius ! Adam's complaint is made to the Archangel Michael. He who knew the future might have consoled Adam with the promise that the great boon of God's sensible presence should be more than restored to his posterity. He might have told of the day when, throughout every country of that “ nether

world" to which Adam was exiled, altars with "stones of lustre" should be raised, and "sweet-smelling gums and flowers" poured out, not merely to commemorate God's passing visits, but to receive and honour His abiding presence.

But Milton knew not of this presence. His country had renounced it; and when he wrote, every Catholic priest who dared to erect an altar was treated as a felon and a traitor.

So Milton, after putting in the heart and mouth of Adam the feelings and expressions of Catholic Ritualism, has to fall back on his Protestantism for a reply. And cold comfort indeed it is that Adam receives. He is told that

"God's omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives."

One would have thought that Adam knew this already. But Protestantism had taught Milton its own theory of spirituality, and it led him into the blunder that Adam, innocent, knew God's nature less perfectly than the youngest child of his fallen posterity.

Wordsworth, whose beautiful account of God's presence, taken from Holy Scripture, has been already quoted, also felt the difficulty of the Protestant view. He has recourse to two explanations. The first is to doubt the literal interpretation of the sacred text. He

suggests a doubt whether the "pure heights" of man's primeval intercourse with God, were

"Of actual vision, sensible
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
Have condescendingly been shadow'd forth
Communications spiritually maintain'd,
And intuitions moral and divine."

He goes even further than this; and seems to class with the divine presence recorded in Scripture the fanciful theophanies of all the Pagans. Thus Adam walking with God in Paradise, though higher in degree, is put in the same category with the Grecian herdsman who

"Stretch'd
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
With music lull'd his indolent repose;
And in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetch'd
Even from the blazing chariot of the sun
A beardless youth, who touch'd a golden lute,
And fill'd the illumined groves with ravishment."

I do not know whither such theories can lead, except to Wordsworth's favourite doctrine, that the imagination is the ennobling faculty of man, and ultimately to Renan's impious assertion that God is nothing else than the "category of the ideal."

But whence did these theories arise? Wordsworth supposes an objection made that "this scheme of fine propensities" would tend, if urged—

“ Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh
The weeds of Romish phantasy.”

Alas! they have no such tendency. They spring from the ignorance of those divine *realities* which are the object of Catholic faith. That faith has been called “phantasy” so long, and those realities looked upon as dreams, that at last our philosophic poets and poetical theologians of the present day, perceiving that the faith of the old scriptural times was of a kindred nature to that of Catholics, are beginning to look upon Scripture itself as little else than “the weeds of phantasy.”

However, this essay is not addressed to Rationalists. I have all along taken for granted that my readers admit, with the Catholic Church, the authenticity and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments; and the object of the present chapter is to show to the Protestant who admits the wonders of the Old Testament, and denies the wonders of the Catholic Church, that he is inconsistent—that from his point of view there is no harmony in the providence of God. In the belief of Catholics, there is one grand and harmonious development from the first day of the world to the end. The notion of most Protestants seems to be, that just as in the early days of the world there were mastodons and ichthyosauri, which have now passed away, and given place to a more diminutive race, so, in the ancient times, God’s dealings were more marvellous, the

proofs of God's providence more clear, and the tokens of His love more frequent than in these latter days of the world.

But this is surely not the doctrine of Scripture. The prophets looked forwards, not backwards, for the great manifestation of God's power and love. The crust of the earth may have cooled in the lapse of ages, and the giant productions of primitive times been replaced by a more puny animal and vegetable kingdom, but God's love has not grown cool, nor has the grandeur of the religion of patriarchs and prophets shrunk into the petty sectarianism of an unsupernatural Christianity.

Though God changes not, yet His scheme of revelation was one of continuous progress. Jesus Christ came that men might have life more abundantly, and the kingdom of God which He established was to comprise, develop, and bring to perfection whatever was good in the dispensations which preceded it. Among these good things, one of the most excellent, most beneficial, most loving of the inventions of God was that of a special sensible Presence in the midst of men; and oh! that Protestants could know it! the very triumph of the love of God, the most fertile source of every virtue, the strength, the hope, the beauty, the glory of the Christian Church, whose worship is spirit and truth, is that Real Presence so flippantly bandied about by controversialists, and so fearfully blasphemed in the last

three centuries. "Oh! that they knew the gift of God!" (John iv. 10).

The Holy Eucharist is the noblest of the sacraments, and the end to which the others lead. It is the life of the whole ecclesiastical year. It is the victim in the daily sacrifice at which all assemble. It is the fountain of the Church's poetry. It is the source of the love and adoration which built those mighty cathedrals at which the modern world wonders. And yet this external memorial, which is the central point of everything external, is itself pre-eminently the Mystery of Faith. Faith, then, is the keystone of the whole arch of Catholic Ritualism.

The last of the Old Testament prophets had said, "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation" (Mal. i. 11). And He who gave the New Testament renewed this promise when He said, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 23); and He made the Testament which fulfils both when He said, "THIS DO FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME."

CHAPTER XVII.

TWO VIEWS OF HISTORY.

I HAVE now fulfilled my task to the best of my ability. I have met openly the great objection which Protestants are ever bringing against Catholic worship—that *they* do not find authority for it in the New Testament. Have any strangers to the Catholic worship, yet endowed with the nobility of spirit so praised in the Bereans, followed me thus far in the search through Scripture, I cannot but think that their prejudices will have been greatly shaken. They may be inclined to pursue the subject farther, and to examine that tradition or history of which so much has been said, and which is the real teacher regarding the nature of Christianity.

I will conclude with some reflections regarding the study of Christian history, which seem to me the natural corollary of the discussion we have been pursuing.

There are two great views of Christian history: according as we adopt one or other of them, will be,

not only our judgment regarding the Catholic Church, but our interpretation of Scripture.

The history of religion, according to the ordinary Protestant view, is an immense anti-climax. Judaism is a half-success. Christianity is a catastrophe. In the Twelfth Book of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the Archangel Michael draws out for Adam the long history of his posterity. In grand pictures taken from Scripture, the four thousand years of preparation pass in review. All progresses in expectation of the promised Deliverer. He comes, He dies, rises triumphant, and ascends into heaven. Adam exclaims in rapture :

“ O goodness infinite, goodness immense !
That all this good of evil shall produce.”

But his raptures are premature ; he has the curiosity to ask Michael what shall follow the preaching of the Apostles. Great and glorious things, doubtless, while Michael draws his prophecy from the Acts of the Apostles. He tells of the descent of the Holy Ghost, the gift of tongues, and miracles.

“ Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven ; at length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die.”

But as soon as Michael—Milton's Michael of course—leaves Scripture, and takes the Protestant view of his-

tory, how changed is the scene! Scarcely are the Apostles dead, when wicked men

“The truth
With superstition and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Whence heavy persecutions shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfied.”

And so the world goes on, “under its own weight groaning,” till the day of doom.

The reader must be of a very genial temperament who, with this philosophy of history in his mind, can exclaim with Adam—Milton’s Adam of course :—

“Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought.”*

O how different and how consoling is the Catholic view of God’s providence! How grand are the words with which Bossuet sums up his discourse on universal history: “Etre attendu, venir, être reconnu par une posterité qui dure autant que le monde, c’est le caractère du Messie en qui nous croyons.”†

It is strange that the same historical facts should have two such contradictory interpretations. It is stranger still that the advocates of each should ap-

* Milton’s “Paradise Lost,” Book xii.

† Bossuet, “Discours sur l’Histoire Universelle,” 2^e Partie, c. 31.

peal to the very same Scriptures in support of their views.

The truth is, however, that in both cases the view is antecedent to the interpretation of Scripture, consciously so with Catholics, unconsciously, though not less really, with Protestants.

The Catholic Church reads Scripture in the light of her own history. Fulfilments interpret prophecies, and facts give meaning to words.

With Protestants the denial of the Church is previous to the reading of Scripture, and gives to it its character. The testimony of history is deliberately set aside in favour of the private interpretation, and then the private interpretation necessitates a new view of history. I will take a recent example of this.

The author of "*Liber Librorum*" affirms, that the Apostles founded no society bearing any resemblance to the Catholic Church. He then puts the very natural question, How then came such an institution into existence? He admits that "nothing can be plainer than that about a hundred years after the death of John, it appears," although, he adds, "in anything but Apostolic garb."

The obvious answer would be, that it *appears*, not because it then started into existence, but because the historical documents that attest its existence become more numerous.

It would also be quite satisfactory to say that the change of garb is only in the author's brain, as he contrasts the testimony of history with the fanciful vision of Apostolic Christianity which he has built for himself. By the end of that one century after the death of St John, he says, "All is altered!" and then he quotes the words of Dean Stanley: "No other change equally momentous has ever since affected the fortunes of the Church; yet none has ever been so silent and so secret." Well may this be said if the Apostles taught Protestant doctrines, since no vestige whatever can be found of such doctrines in the early ages of the Church. One who, with a Protestant bias, had made those ages his long and patient study, was constrained to acknowledge: "Whatever be historical Christianity, it is not Protestantism. If ever there were a safe truth, it is this. And Protestantism has ever felt it. This is shown in the determination of dispensing with historical Christianity altogether, and of forming a Christianity from the Bible alone. Men would never have put it aside, unless they had despaired of it."

"All is altered!" says the Protestant writer above quoted, and that in less than a hundred years after the Apostles. We look for proof of this amazing proposition; and for all proof we have the still more astounding assertion, "No change so momentous, yet none so silent and secret!" The irony of Dr Newman

is the only answer such theories deserve: "If such a system of doctrine as the Protestant would now introduce ever existed in early times, it had been clean swept away, as if by a deluge, suddenly, silently, and without memorial, by a deluge coming in a night, and utterly soaking, rotting, heaving up, and hurrying off every vestige of what it found in the Church, before cock-crowing, . . . and the deluge has in its turn disappeared itself, it has been swallowed up in the earth mercilessly as itself was merciless." *

Yet there is a consolation for Catholics in such confessions as the above.

They show that the battle of the last three centuries has not been without result. When first the notion was proclaimed in Europe that the Catholic Church had corrupted her ways upon the earth, and betrayed the deposit of truth, men asked in surprise when this had taken place, and how far back in the ages they were to look for pure Christianity. And of the innovators some claimed five, some six, and some even seven centuries from the death of the Apostles. Very soon, however, it was found safer to declare that the conversion of the nations, and the establishment of Christianity in the fourth century, had proved fatal to the Gospel. Afterwards it was granted that even in ante-nicene times the evil was accomplished. Now it is confessed that by the

* Newman's "Church of the Fathers."

end of the first century "all was altered;" and the "momentous change" was effected. The enemy has abandoned rampart after rampart of history, and retreated to the citadel of the Bible. There are signs that he is preparing even to abandon that, though he is determined to blow it up, rather than leave us to occupy it.

If all was altered by the end of the first century, of course the alteration must have been in process long before. Yes! says our author, "*One of the greatest historical facts in the world* is the existence and influence of a departure from the faith, which, working *unseen* during the later portions of the Apostolic age, rapidly developed after the decease of the last member of the sacred college into that mystery of iniquity which culminated in Rome."*

It is acknowledged, then, that Popery was already in existence, and at work, in the *later portions of the Apostolic age*. I should not wonder if the theory of Renan soon found advocates among some Protestants, that this same Popery can already be traced in the *later* teaching of Jesus Christ himself. Renan at least acknowledges that Catholic asceticism is due to the lessons of the Master, though he blames Him for it.†

* "Liber Librorum," p. 120.

† "Quelque chose de plus qu' humain et d'étrange se mêlait alors à ses paroles ; c'était comme un feu, dévorant la vie à sa racine et réduisant tout à un affreux désert. Le sentiment âpre et triste de dégoût pour le

Renan is consistent, for he holds that Jesus Christ was a mere man ; but how those who hold that he was more than man can reconcile this with their theory of the corruption of Christianity, it is not easy to see. Jesus Christ had said "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Yet we are told that it passed away, *except on paper*, by the end of a century or two. Did He foresee this? Did He know beforehand, when He pronounced those words, that it would be impossible for men to learn any true Christianity from tradition, that the only real method of coming at truth would be by the study of the Bible? Knowing that, did He make no provision for the diffusion of the Bible? Did He allow the possession of the Bible, except by a very few, to be simply impossible for fourteen hundred years? and knowing that His Word would be inaccessible—totally inaccessible to men until the invention of printing*—did He still say, "My word shall not pass away"? If such is the Protestant view, Renan will not be long in making converts.

But it is still more perplexing to conceive how men

monde, d'abnégation outrée, qui caractérise la perfection chrétienne eut pour fondateur, non le fin et joyeux moraliste des premiers jours, mais le géant sombre qu'une sorte de presentiment grandiose jetait de plus en plus hors de l'humanité."—*Renan, Vie de Jésus*, p. 312.

* "The Catholic canon of Scripture contains 35,877 verses, making 12,783 folios. This would fill 427 skins of parchment on both sides, costing £85, and the cost of the copying would be £133 ; the total expense being therefore £218."—*Buckingham's Bible in the Middle Ages*, p. 2.

who hold such opinions as these should attempt to do what, according to them, Jesus Christ and His apostles could not do, that is, establish the reign of truth on the earth. When the grandsons of the first reformers were just beginning to think of converting the heathen, St Francis of Sales could not restrain a little gentle banter. "What!" he said, "if Augustin and Chrysostom, and Ambrose and Gregory, and so many other excellent pastors, could not prevent the Church from tumbling on its face" ("que l'Eglise n'ait donné du nez en terre"), "shortly after their time, as Luther, and Calvin, and the rest keep assuring us, what chance is there that your weak little Church will ever grow to maturity under the nursing of your ministers, who in learning and sanctity certainly cannot be compared to the ancient doctors? Such a hope would be vain indeed, and none but yourselves could entertain it! If the Church in its spring-time and its prime was not fruitful, as you tell us, shall we expect to gather fruits from it in the winter of its old age? If it staggered in its youth, where will it run to in its decrepitude?"*

Now this essay was undertaken in the hope that it might assist some Protestants in obtaining more reasonable and more cheerful views of history than those I have just been considering.

I stated, in the introductory chapter, that it was in-

* S. Francis de Sales, "Controverses," Discours lxxiii.



tended for those who had no wish to believe evil of Catholic worship, but who thought themselves compelled to do so by their allegiance to Scripture. I had conceived that there would be among Protestants many who would desire to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ, yet who would not deem it essential to His honour to believe with Milton, that the "far greater part" of His nominal disciples in all ages, have deemed "in outward rites and specious forms religion satisfied;" I liked to think that many Protestants would rejoice in the thought, if it could be proved to them to be true, that the religion of Him who died for men, has had historical realisation among men, and that it was not, after the death of the Apostles—

"Left only in the written records pure."

In order to attain this end, I have endeavoured to place myself in the Protestant point of view, that I might discover the main source of the prevalent distrust of the worship of Catholics.

I believed that it arose from certain false principles assumed as axioms. These are, the notions that Christianity is all contained in Scripture, and that tradition is corruption.

I have endeavoured to remove misconceptions and prejudices by showing the real relations of Scripture and tradition : and how Ritual is related to each of them.

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If the New Testament points to tradition, that is, to historical Christianity, as the channel and exponent of Ritual ; if historical Ritual, when examined, is found to be in perfect harmony with the New Testament ; and if the principles through which Ritual has been developed are also recognised in the New Testament, I do not know what further proof can be desired that the Catholic Church and her worship are the work of Him to whom the New Testament owes its inspiration.

I have now come to the end of my "search." Yet all that I have said is no more than an introduction to the study of Catholic Ritual. Mine has been the humble task to discover the proper point of view and to remove intervening obstacles. It is for more skilful hands than mine to depict that glorious Ritual to which I have sought to turn my reader's gaze. With one reflection, founded upon all that has been said, I will conclude.

It was intended by God that we should look back upon Scripture from the communion of the Church, not that we should measure the living Church, or build up a Church of the future, from our own conceptions of Scripture. Oh ! how different is the New Testament according as we adopt one or other of these two courses !

If we give our own conjectural meanings to the words

of Jesus Christ, then they are as words which were spoken for no purpose, except to have been the occasion of error and the subject of dispute. But if we believe that they are indeed God's words, words of power and life, creative words, words that shall never pass away,—and if in this belief we look for their meaning in their realisation, how grand is the New Testament !

We see a Church that fills the world at present, and that has filled the history of eighteen centuries, against which every power is striving and has striven ; and that Church proclaims,—My life is in my commission : “Go, teach all nations ;” my strength is in the promise, “I am with you all days.” How wondrous are these words thus read in their fulfilment !

We see presiding over that Church one who claims descent from Peter. He is the visible foundation of the Church, while he is the stone of stumbling to all her enemies. How the Catholic heart beats when it recalls the word, “Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

We read of the last words of Jesus Christ on earth, how He foretold that “penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke xxiv. 47). We put no interpretation of our own upon these words, for they are a divine prophecy, and we look for God's own interpreta-

tion in their historical fulfilment. And in that history we find that there was preached, not merely the doctrine of repentance, but also a sacrament of Baptism for the remission of sins, and a sacrament of Penance for the pardon of sins committed after Baptism. And we remember how another Evangelist tells us of a power conferred: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (John xx. 23); and we question not but that those words are the germ of the mighty tree which spreads its branches before our eyes.

We open the Church's catalogue of saints, and we find that they belong to every age and every clime, and we remember who said, "Many shall come from the east, and the west, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God" (Matt. viii. 11). We note among those saints one whose name is held in benediction above the rest. We remark how devotion to the Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ has struck its roots deep into the hearts of all the children of the Catholic Church. We do not lament or criticise, nor do we grow anxious lest the worship of her Son should suffer. We remember how, when God foreshowed to Mary this very devotion which we now see in historical fulfilment, Mary's spirit exulted in God her Saviour, "because from henceforth all generations should call her blessed." We remember that Mary foretold her own glories, as a part of the accomplishment of the

promise that had been made to her : " Thy Son shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High ; " and we too magnify the Lord, while we bless her who is all-blessed.

Or, lastly, we see the worship which in every country has for ages been offered to God ; and we remember how eighteen hundred years ago the Son of God said, " Woman, believe me that the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore Him " (John iv. 21, 23). And we doubt not that the Father has found those whom He sought, that in every country He has found true adorers, and that the worship which we see offered to Him in every country, the worship of which Catholic Ritual is a part, is that worship in spirit and in truth which the Son of God foretold.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL PASSAGES OF HOLY SCRIPTURE MADE USE OF IN THIS ESSAY.

| | PAGE |
|--|-------------------------|
| Gen. iii. 8 Apparition in Paradise, | 302-304 |
| xxviii. 16 Jacob's vision, | 320 |
| Exod. xix. 16 Apparition on Sinai, | 306, 312, 313 |
| xxv. 22 The Propitiatory, | 306 |
| xl. 33 The Majesty of God, | 306 |
| Deut. iv. 7 God present to the Jews, | 307 |
| vi. 6-9 Memorials of the great commandment, | 276, 277 |
| II. Kings vi. 12-23, | |
| (<i>Prot. Samuel</i>) David's pomp; Michal's scorn, | 131, 132 |
| III. (<i>Prot. I.</i>) Kings | |
| viii. 27 God's presence, | 307 |
| IV. (<i>Prot. II.</i>) Kings | |
| xix. 14-16 Prayer of Ezechias, | 309 |
| Ps. xviii. (<i>Prot. xix.</i>) | |
| 1-4 God's works His witnesses, | 152 |
| Ps. lvii. (<i>Prot. lviii.</i>) | |
| 5, 6 The deaf asp, | 104 |
| Ps. lxxxiii. (<i>Prot.</i> | |
| lxxxiv.) David's devotion to God's presence, | 131, 307 |
| Wisdom xiii. 1-5 Nature teaches of God, | 73 |
| Ecclus. xliii. 30-32 God's Majesty a reason for splendour, | 283 |
| Isa. xii. 4-6 Promise of God's presence | 310 |
| xxx. 29 Joyous solemnities of the old Law, | 131 |
| lx. 13 Types of the Church, | 119 |
| Jer. xxxi. 31-34 Promise of the New Testament, | 173, 174, 178, 271 |
| Zach. xii. 10 Spirit of prayer promised to Christians, | 276 |
| Mal. i. 11 The Christian oblation, | 327 |
| S. Matt. i. 9-11 Adoration of the Magi, | 51, 286, 290, 292 |
| iii. 11 Baptism of fire, | 210 |
| xvi. 18 Promise to St Peter, | 339 |
| xvii. 2 Splendour of Transfiguration, | 54 |
| xx. 16 Triumphal procession, | 293 |
| xxiv. 30 Majesty of the Day of Judgment, | 60 |
| xxiv. 35 Christ's word shall not pass away, | 335, 339 |
| xxvi. 26-29 Institution of Holy Communion, | 223 |
| xxvii. 45 Darkness on Calvary, | 55 |
| xxvii. 54 Earthquake at the Passion, | 55 |
| xxviii. 19 Command to baptize, | 179, 212 |
| xxviii. 20 Promise of Christ's presence, | 339 |
| S. Mark i. 10, 11 Phenomena at our Lord's baptism, | 53 |
| vii. 7, 9 Traditions of the Pharisees, | 163, 165, 170, 171, 202 |
| vii. 33 Cure of the deaf mute | 103, 104 |
| viii. 11 Promise of Catholicity and Sanctity, | 340 |
| viii. 23 Cure of the blind man, | 103 |
| ix. 2 Bright robes at Transfiguration, | 54 |
| xi. 17 Piping and lamenting, | 285 |
| xiv. 3-9 Magdalen's "waste," | 291 |
| xv. 29 Blasphemers of Jesus, | 206 |
| xvi. 16 Promise regarding Baptism, | 210, 237-240 |

| | PAGE |
|---|-----------------------------|
| S. Luke i. 1.....Many primitive Gospels, | 193, 200 |
| i. 48.....Blessed Virgin's prophecy, | 340 |
| ii. 8-10.....Apparition to the Shepherds, | 51, 292 |
| xi. 39-42.....Pharisaic observances, | 96, 97 |
| xviii. 10-14 Pharisee and Publican, | 98, 99 |
| xix. 30-40.....Triumphal procession, | 293 |
| xxii. 19.....The great commemoration, | 38, 179, 223, 275, 278, 327 |
| xxiii. 56.....Embalming of our Lord's body, | 83 |
| xxiv. 4.....Shining apparel, | 56 |
| xxiv. 47.....Penance to be preached, | 339 |
| S. John i. 26.....Jesus in the crowd, | 312 |
| iv. 19-24.....Worship in spirit and in truth, | 32-35, 330, 340 |
| v. 4.....The angel at the pool, | 203-205 |
| v. 39, 40.....Searching the Scriptures, | 18, 30, 61, 69 |
| ix. 6, 7.....Cure of the blind man, | 103 |
| xii. 30.....Heavenly voice, | 54 |
| xiii. 6-15.....Washing the Disciples' feet, | 105, 227, 299 |
| xvii. 21.....Our Lord's prayer for unity, | 147 |
| xx. 23.....Sacrament of Penance, | 116, 156, 340 |
| xxi. 25.....Many things unrecorded in Gospels, | 249 |
| Acts i. 3.....Things of the kingdom of God, | 251, 259 |
| ii. 2, 3.....Phenomena of Pentecost, | 58 |
| ii. 17, 19.....Prophecy of Joel quoted, | 59 |
| viii. 35, 36.....Philip "preaching Jesus," | 213, 214 |
| xv. 10.....The old law a burden, | 129 |
| xvii. 11.....Example of the Bereans, | 17, 39 |
| xix. 1-6.....John's baptism, | 209, 212, 213 |
| xx. 27.....St Paul's charge to the elders, | 183, 185, 191 |
| xx. 35.....A saying of Jesus not in the Gospels, | 200 |
| xxi. 11.....Agabus, | 106, 116 |
| Rom. vi. 3.....Doctrine of Baptism, | 219 |
| 1 Cor. v. 9.....A lost Epistle, | 201 |
| x. 15, 16.....Why St Paul speaks of the Euclarist, | 224 |
| xi. 2-16.....Covering and uncovering the head, | 112-114 |
| xi. 23-25.....Institution of the Holy Eucharist, | 224, 225 |
| xi. 26.....Holy Communion never to cease, | 254 |
| xiv. 24.....Worship of God, | 295 |
| Gal. iv. 9-11.....The Sabbath, | 228 |
| Col. ii. 6, 12.....Baptism typical, | 219 |
| ii. 16.....The Sabbath, | 228 |
| iv. 16.....Reading the Epistles, | 180 |
| I. Thess. v. 27.....Reading the Epistles, | 180 |
| II. Thess. ii. 14.....Apostolic traditions, | 180 |
| I. Tim. vi. 20.....Oral teaching, | 180 |
| II. Tim. i. 13.....Oral teaching, | 180 |
| II. Tim. iii. 16.....Study of Scripture, | 187, 185 |
| Heb. v. 13.....Spiritual Infancy, | 118 |
| vi. 1, 2.....Ritual a fundamental, | 263 |
| v. 5.....Pattern on the Mount, | 270 |
|The just live by faith, | 36, 317 |
| v. 6-18.....Obscurity of the Epistles, | 264, 265 |
| 1 John, v. 13, 14 Advantages of oral communication, | 143 |
| v. 11-14.....Adoration of the Lamb, | 296 |
| viii. 3, 4.....Altar of incense, | 120-124 |

THE END.

